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| Name of Association | Association of Classical & Christian Schools |
| Contact Person | Tom Spencer |
| Date Report Submitted (mm/dd/yyyy) | 07/24/2019 |
| Mailing Address | PO Box 9741 |
| City | Moscow |
| State | ID |
| Zip | 83843 |
| Phone Number | (208) 882-6101 |
| Fax Number | |
| Website | https://classicalchristian.org/ |
| Email | tspencer@accsedu.org |
| Current Recognition Status | Recognized |
| Last Year Status Was Awarded | 2010 |
| Accredited Schools 2 Years Ago | 1 |
| Accredited Schools 1 Year Ago | 1 |
| Accredited Schools Current School Year | 1 |
| Pre Accredited Schools 2 Years Ago | 0 |
| Pre Accredited Schools 1 Year Ago | 0 |
| Pre Accredited Schools Current School Year | 0 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Total in Accreditation Process 2 Years Ago | 1 |
| Total in Accreditation Process 1 Year Ago | 1 |
| Total in Accreditation Process Current School Year | 1 |
| Total Member Schools 2 Years Ago | 3 |
| Total Member Schools 1 Year Ago | 3 |
| Total Member Schools Current School Year | 4 |
| a. New Applications | 1 |
| b. School Site Visits (all purposes) | 1 |
| c. Schools Awarded Full Accreditation Status (first-time) | 0 |
| d. Schools Denied Accreditation | 0 |
| e. Schools Placed on Exception, Warning, or Probation | 0 |
| f. Accreditation Re-Evaluations | 1 |
| g. Total Number of Students Enrolled (all schools in the accreditation process) | 467 |
| h. Total Number of Teachers | 0 |
| i. Conferences/Workshops/Training Seminars | 2019 Leader's Day Pre-Conference, Atlanta, GA (June 11, 2019); 2019 Repairing the Ruins Conference, Atlanta, GA (June 12-15, 2019) |
| Describe | Leader's Day is a one-day event with programming for school administrators and board members. The annual conference also includes programming for teachers from both member and non-member classical Christian schools. |
| j. Other Accreditation Activities/Services | ACCS Committee on Accreditation |
| Describe_1 | The committee was tasked with completing a review of the entire accreditation program. This resulted in a comprehensive revision of the ACCS accreditation handbook, the first complete revision since the program was established. |
| k. Total Number of High School Graduates | 129 |

| | |
|--|---|
| I. Total Number of School Employees (paid administrators, teachers, instructional staff) | 85 (53 FT, 32 PT) (62 Teaching, 23 staff) |
| m. Median Tuition | \$8,600 |
| n. Total Dollar Amount of Need-Based Financial Aid Distributed | \$232,000 |
| o. Total Dollar Amount of Employee Financial Aid (tuition remission) | \$206,000 |
| p. Percentage of Students | 15% |
| q. Mean Full-Time K-12 Teacher Salaries | \$44,900 |
| 1 Year Ago | |
| 1 Year Ago_1 | |
| 1 Year Ago_2 | |
| 1 Year Ago_3 | |
| 2 Years Ago | |
| 2 Years Ago | |
| 2 Years Ago_1 | |
| 2 Years Ago_2 | |
| Current School Year | |
| Current School Year_1 | |
| Current School Year_2 | |
| Current School Year_3 | |
| 1. Purpose/objectives of the accrediting association | Remained the Same |
| 1. Type of Changes | |
| 2.. Location of Accreditation Association Headquarters | Remained the Same |
| 2. Type of Changes | |
| 3. Accreditation and Pre-Accreditation Status Levels | Remained the Same |
| 3. Type of Changes | |
| 4. Public Relations Flier and Key Publications | Remained the Same |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 4. Type of Changes | |
| 5. Articles of Incorporation, ByLaws | Remained the Same |
| 5. Type of Changes | |
| 5. Upload File | |
| 6. Legal Governing Body | Remained the Same |
| 6. Type of Changes | |
| 6. Upload File | |
| 7. Accreditation Procedures | Changed Since Last Reporting |
| 7. Type of Changes | The ACCS President now makes the decision whether or not to accept the recommendation from the visit committee, which is forwarded from the Director of Accreditation. Previously, the ACCS board of directors made this decision. Any appeals following the president's decision would be heard by the ACCS board of directors. |
| 8. Application Form/Procedures | Changed Since Last Reporting |
| 8. Type of Changes | In the application, boards must now certify that upon receiving accreditation, they will have their teachers become ACCS certified teachers. Each board member must now assert individual support for the ACCS statement of faith. Documentation that shows the school complies with the requirements for ACCS school membership. |
| 9. Nondiscriminatory Policies | Remained the Same |
| 9. Type of Changes | |
| 9. Upload File | |
| 10. Strategic/Master Plan | Remained the Same |
| 10. Type of Changes | |
| 11. Accreditation Manual/Handbook | Changed Since Last Reporting |
| 11. Type of Changes | The accreditation handbook was revised. The primary goal was to better communication expectations to schools seeking accreditation. We also added a Mission Statement for the accreditation program. |
| 11. Upload File | i-accreditation handbook second edition online changes.pdf |
| 12. Accreditation Fees and Charges | Remained the Same |
| 12. Type of Changes | |

13. Other Items Related to Standards or Substantive Change

Changed Since Last Reporting

13. Type of Changes

Each accreditation standard now includes an indicator and a list of required documentation.

13. Upload File

Upload File (A)

[opsac_association_school_listing_form - completed.xlsx](#)

Upload File (B)

[opsac 2019 governing board.docx](#)


Upload File (D-1)

Upload File (D-2)

Upload File (D-3)

Name

Andrew D. Shapleigh

ASSOCIATION OF
CLASSICAL  **CHRISTIAN**
SCHOOLS

**ACCS SCHOOL
ACCREDITATION**

A School-
Improvement
Program for
Schools Serving
Christ through
a Classical
Christian
Education

**ACCS ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK
SECOND EDITION • EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2019**

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The Association of Classical & Christian Schools

PO Box 9741 (317 West 6th Street, Suite #211), Moscow, Idaho 83843

Phone (208) 882-6101

APPLICATION FOR SCHOOL ACCREDITATION & RENEWAL



SCHOOL NAME _____

OFFICIAL LEGAL NAME _____ FEDTAXID (EIN) _____

STREET ADDRESS/MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL _____ WEBSITE _____

YEAR FOUNDED _____ ENROLLMENT _____ GRADES TAUGHT _____

ACCS MEMBERSHIP SINCE (MONTH/YEAR) _____

CONTACT PERSON _____ TITLE _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

For the school to be approved as a **Candidate for Accreditation** or for **Accreditation Renewal** by the director of accreditation, this application must be accompanied by the following documentation:

1. Formal action from the school board indicating its decision to pursue ACCS Accreditation. The board also affirms that the school will have teachers become ACCS certified upon receiving accreditation. Finally, the board affirms that the school supports the work and mission of ACCS.
2. Official statement from the school board affirming that each board member has read and affirms the ACCS Statement of Faith as their personal belief. Exceptions may be considered upon an explanatory letter from the board member(s) in question, provided to the director of accreditation. Second, the statement should affirm that each board member attends or is a member of a Christian church. Include a list of board members and the name of the church they attend.
3. Verification from the school board that the school is not in violation of state law in the state in which the school resides.
4. Documentation showing that the school conforms to the membership requirements of the ACCS. (For membership requirements, see the Member Handbook or the Summary of Membership Requirement under "Join" on the ACCS website.)

- a. Documentation that shows the school is committed to providing, or finding a path to, full K–12 classical Christian education for their students, now or in the future. This may include a partnership with other schools.
 - b. Documentation that shows that the school does not explicitly endorse unbiblical family relationships or implicitly affirm unbiblical family relationships in employment policies.
 - c. Evidence that the school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and national or ethnic origin with regard to *enrollment*, as well as, for *hiring*.
 - d. Documents that show, in the grades served, that the school conforms to the trivium, as well as provides, at a minimum, two years of instruction in Latin or ancient Greek for each student, and one year of formal logic and one year of rhetoric in the secondary.
5. Documentation (e.g., marketing materials or web pages), providing a public description of the school, promoted as a classical Christian school, including the school's mission statement. Evidence that the school offers at least grades K–10 (K–12 with a graduating class is required before accreditation is awarded) and has been in operation for at least four full academic years with enrolled students should also be included. (Five years of operation will be required before accreditation is awarded).
 6. List of faculty, both full- and part-time, courses they teach, and degrees held by each. Include the school's hiring policy (or written requirements) that defines the qualifications for teachers. All faculty members must meet the school's written requirements for the position they hold.
 7. A check for \$2,000 towards processing fees. The remaining \$2,000 will be due following receipt of the accreditation draft report. (The school will also be responsible for travel, lodging, and meal expenses incurred by the Accreditation Committee who undertakes the site visit.)
 8. **Initial Accreditation ONLY.** Describe the steps taken to ascertain that the school is likely to achieve ACCS Accreditation (consultant(s) engaged, school visits, etc.).
 9. **Renewals ONLY.** A letter explaining the correction of each discrepancy and any action taken on each recommendation from the last accreditation report. Provide documentation for the discrepancy corrections.

The signature below affirms the school's commitment to pay all substantiated expenses directly related to the accreditation visit, upon billing from ACCS.

SIGNATURE OF HEAD OF SCHOOL

DATE

If you are unable to meet any of the items listed above, please call the ACCS office at (208) 882-6101 to discuss the item more fully.

Please return this form with the required attachments and initial payment to the Association of Classical and Christian Schools. (For credit/debit card payments please call our office.) Once these items have been received, you will be contacted by the director of accreditation to confirm the school's status.

PROLOGUE

A. INTERNAL DEFINITIONS

Definitions are new.

- Grammar grades: K–6
- Dialectic or logic phase: 7–8
- Rhetoric phase: 9–12
- “Secondary” refers to 7–12.
- “Authorized” as used with “diploma” refers to the ability of the accredited school to issue diplomas that are authorized by the ACCS. This authorization is similar to that of other program-type specific diplomas, for example, the International Baccalaureate diploma. ACCS schools accredited with certain endorsements (K–8 for example) may not issue authorized diplomas.
- “Director of Accreditation,” alternately referred to as the Accreditation Director, refers to an executive position within the ACCS empowered to manage the accreditation process on behalf of the ACCS President, and ultimately, the board of directors.
- “Endorsement” means a specified modification to the standard ACCS accreditation status.
- “Graduation Requirement” means that every graduate of the school must meet the requirement for the ACCS Authorized Diploma(s) offered by the school. The school may offer “certificates” that do not meet these requirements. “Certificate” means a “Certificate of Completion.”
- “Instruction” means teaching done within a class or curriculum, as a component or as the primary topic of a course. “Instruction in” need not reference a course.
- “Primary and secondary” when describing schools or education, refers to K–12 education, as opposed to college or pre-school.
- “Required” as it relates to student requirements means that the student in the school continuously (not a transfer), under normal circumstances, is required to take the course.
- “Year” is the equivalent of a Carnegie unit or 120 hours of instruction.

B. EXPLANATION

Each standard has sub-standards labeled with numerical extensions (A, A1, A2, etc.)

- “Principles” provide the basic logic behind the standard.
- “Indicators” illustrate the means ACCS-accredited schools typically use to demonstrate compliance with the standard. These particular ways are not required nor are they standards.
- “Documentation” identifies the source document required to demonstrate compliance with this standard.

Because we value the more humane, as opposed to analytical, approach to accreditation, we depend on highly qualified teams to exercise their judgment across the spectrum of classical Christian education.

SECTION 1

ACCS SCHOOL ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

GOALS AND MEANS OF THE ACCS SCHOOL ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

The goal of the ACCS school accreditation program is to provide objective and recognized standards of quality for those schools desiring to serve Christ through an explicitly classical and Protestant Christian approach to primary and secondary education.

To this end, ACCS has established criteria for accreditation that ensure that its accredited schools achieve the following:

- A well-conceived program committed to a classical approach to education in light of a Christian worldview grounded in the Old and New Testament Scriptures
- Sufficient, qualified administrative, teacher, and support staff to achieve its goals
- Sufficient instructional and other facility resources to achieve its goals

MISSION STATEMENT **The mission statement is new.**

For schools desiring to serve Christ through an explicitly classical Christian approach to primary and secondary education, ACCS accreditation is a school-improvement program that provides an evaluation of a school and its practices based on objective and humane standards to encourage stability, quality, and a measure of excellence.

ABOUT ACCS ACCREDITATION

ACCS accreditation is an independent, private, Christian form of accountability for schools that define themselves as “classical Christian.” Like conventional K–12 accreditation, ACCS accreditation assesses the quality of processes and practices within a school. Unlike conventional accreditation, the ACCS verifies the conformance to the standards of classical Christian pedagogy as described in the ACCS Membership Handbook.

ACCS has established and implemented accreditation standards which are consistent with the classical Christian educational philosophy and practices promoted by the Association (see the ACCS Membership Handbook). These standards are based on historical and reliable indicators of educational excellence. The accreditation process help schools improve and evaluate a minimum acceptable standard of accomplishment.

ACCS makes its accreditation standards and procedures available to interested parties. ACCS will address any misrepresentation of accredited status by any school whether a member of the Association or not.

This verification of our particular type of education means that outside observers depend on ACCS accreditation to ensure that a particular school performs substantially according to the specialized standards of a classical Christian school. **For this reason, schools may find ACCS accreditation more difficult to earn than other forms of accreditation.**

The ACCS is selective with whom it will seek agreements. In most cases, we do not directly associate with federal or state governments. We do not seek reciprocity with regional accreditors. And, we will not engage in any agreement that will encumber the educational practices of our schools. We do engage private accreditation recognition when this is beneficial and does not compromise our independence. We do not oppose or encourage “dual accreditation” when a school believes that two accreditations would be helpful. However, we do not change our standards or process (e.g., ACCS must select the visit committee members), in dual accreditation situations.

TYPES OF ACCS ACCREDITATION

The majority of ACCS-accredited schools are accredited under our standard accreditation, which requires a school to operate a conventional number of hours and serve grades K–12 (or K–10, see conditions). Standard Accreditation (“Accreditation” herein, unless otherwise noted): K–12 schools that may grant ACCS-authorized, high-school diplomas. 7–12 programs may request a waiver to exclude K–6 under some circumstances. For schools that do not meet the requirements for Standard Accreditation, we have endorsements that communicate to parents and interested parties the relevant limitations or extensions of the modified accreditation.

ACCS ACCREDITATION ENDORSEMENTS

Our endorsement program allows for a variety of types of accreditation available through the ACCS. (See Appendix A).

A. Currently approved and available

1. **Standard Accreditation (with a Diploma Authorization):** Our standard form of accreditation, this form assumes a K–12 academic program spanning a standard school year, day, and hourly schedule comparable with a conventional school in your state. Schools that achieve this level of accreditation, at the school’s option, may issue authorized diplomas with this statement: “Diploma authorized by the Association of Classical Christian Schools.”
2. **Shared-instruction (formerly “Conservatory” Endorsement) (accredited as “shared-instruction”):** Schools that operate with non-traditional schedules or hours to share responsibility for education more heavily with parents. These schools, if they offer a full K–12 program, may grant ACCS-authorized

high-school diplomas. Schools have the option to issue authorized diplomas with this statement: “Diploma authorized by the Association of Classical Christian Schools.”

- B. Currently awaiting development (We are seeking trial schools and standards development.)
1. **Limited grade-level endorsement (accredited as “limited level program”):** This endorsement allows schools to become ACCS accredited without a full K–12 program. Schools with a “limited program” accreditation may not offer high-school diplomas or certificates (ACCS endorsed, or otherwise). Examples include K–6 or K–8 programs in markets where other classical Christian options complete the K–12 experience. *Schools that serve grades 7–12 do not qualify for this endorsement*, nor do schools that are officially in the process of building up to K–12.
 2. **Limited Student-Service Endorsement:** For schools that serve a specific sub-population of students, e.g., learning disabled, physically disabled, missionary kids, etc. This category does not apply to schools with selective application policies that are within the spectrum of “normal.”
- C. Accreditation\Types not available from the ACCS
1. **Daycare Certification:** ACCS does not certify the daycare operations of member schools undergoing ACCS accreditation.
 2. **Regional Reciprocity or Direct State Recognition:** Except where required by law (e.g., Tennessee), we do not offer reciprocity directly with the state, federal, or regional accreditation authorities. We do, however, accept private accreditation recognition from states that offer this service under terms that protect the independence of our schools. The ACCS school accreditation program is currently recognized by Georgia (GAPSAC), Oklahoma (OPSAC), Texas (TEPSAC), and Virginia (VCPE), through their private councils.
- D. Initial accreditation: Initial accreditation for these endorsements may involve one or two visits, depending on the school’s readiness. All schools undergoing accreditation for the first time may earn, at most, provisional accredited status, for a maximum of two years, at which time another accreditation application, self-study, and site visit are required. This helps to ensure that new schools are carefully brought into our system, and that some of the requirements, like teacher certification, are functioning. Well-prepared schools may earn provisional accredited status after the first visit while some schools may require a second visit to achieve provisional status.

ACCREDITATION OVERVIEW

- A. **Timeline.** Generally, schools take between one and two years to complete the accreditation process. (A timeline is included in this handbook.)
- B. **Application.** The director of accreditation will review the application and accompanying documentation for completeness. Upon completion of a successful review, the school will be designated as a Candidate for Accreditation, which is a pre-accredited designation assigned to those schools which meet the initial Conditions of Eligibility and have been accepted for ongoing review toward ACCS school accreditation. Candidates still need to complete a self-study, a site visit, and be approved by the ACCS Board of Directors to receive accredited status. ACCS accreditation candidates may increase the likelihood of achieving ACCS-accredited status through the following:
1. Upon request, the ACCS will provide a list of accreditation consultants who may visit the school, evaluate the school's classroom instruction, and make recommendations. This is encouraged, though not required, and is an additional expense for the school. We strongly recommend this activity for schools that are transitioning from another type of accreditation.
 2. Observe an ACCS-Accredited school in operation.
- C. **Self-Study.** Each candidate school is required to perform a self-study prior to the on-site visit. This study will include input from all members of the school administration and staff. During the self-study, schools will study all standards and requirements, conduct self-evaluations, train personnel, and make necessary changes and adjustments seeking to meet all of the ACCS Conditions of Eligibility and Criteria for Accreditation. This is the second part of a process where schools demonstrate compliance with ACCS accreditation requirements.
- D. **Site Visit.** Although much may be gleaned about a school from the self-evaluation documentation package, an on-site visit is required to affirm all aspects of the school's operation, including, but not limited to, classroom pedagogy, student participation and development, staff relations, parent-teacher relations, financial policies and procedures, board oversight, and community support. ACCS will appoint an accreditation committee to make the visit.
- E. **Report.** The site visit results in a formal, written report to the director of accreditation. Accreditation reports have three types of determinations that are always in reference to a specific standard.
1. **Commendation:** The school's practice exceeds the standard in such a way that it deserves commendation.
 2. **Recommendation:** The school's practice could be improved by taking the recommended action, but the school meets the minimum requirements for that standard.
 3. **Discrepancy:** The school falls short of one of the standards in its practices. Discrepancies may be major or minor in nature, as designated on the report.
- F. **Accredited Status Determination.** The director of accreditation will forward the recommendation (as to whether the school has met all ACCS accreditation requirements), to the president. Recommendations

range from full accredited status, to provisional or probationary accreditation, to failed accreditation (and continued candidacy status). The ACCS President is authorized to make a final determination as to whether or not a school receives accreditation. Should the decision be appealed by the school in question, the appeal will go to the ACCS Board of Directors.

Once the president has taken action to accept the proposed accredited status, the school is accredited (or if the school fails an initial accreditation, the school may remain a candidate for accreditation).

1. Schools undergoing accreditation for the first time may fail based upon the number and nature of discrepancies in the visiting team's report.
 2. Schools undergoing accreditation for the first time may be granted "Provisional Accreditation" as long as discrepancies remain.
 3. Schools that are undergoing a renewal may be granted "Probationary Accreditation" if discrepancies remain.
 4. Schools that are undergoing a renewal may fail based on the number and nature of discrepancies.
 5. Schools with no remaining discrepancies will be classified as "Accredited."
- G. Re-evaluation. All schools accredited by ACCS must undergo regular accreditation renewals in order to retain their accredited status. Schools that were successfully accredited but fall short of the requirements on subsequent renewal visits may be initially placed in a Probationary Status for a fixed amount of time to allow them to correct discrepancies.
- H. Annual Updates. ACCS requires annual feedback from each accredited school (as part of the membership renewal process) to ensure schools remain in compliance with the ACCS accreditation standards. Notifications of certain changes on this annual form may provoke an accreditation review. As part of this review, schools may be required to submit additional documentation.

CANDIDACY STATUS: PROCESS AND QUALIFICATIONS

- A. To be recognized as a candidate for accreditation, the applicant-school must submit a complete application for accreditation (or accreditation renewal) with all specified documentation.
- Note on board member requirements: The school must be governed by a board of at least three members (a husband and a wife serving on the board counting as one member), who are members of a Christian church and whose church and personal beliefs align with the ACCS Statement of Faith. (Each board member must affirm their personal agreement with the ACCS Statement of Faith. If individual board members cannot affirm the statement of faith as their personal belief, or if they do not attend or are not members of a Christian church, they must provide a written statement explaining the reasons for their position. These statements will be reviewed by the ACCS President.)
- B. The director of accreditation will review the application and accompanying documentation for completeness. This may involve clarifications or requests for additional information.

- C. Upon completion of a successful review of the application by the director of accreditation, the school will be designated as a Candidate for Accreditation, which is a pre-accredited designation assigned to those schools which meet the initial Conditions of Eligibility (see application) and have been accepted for ongoing review toward ACCS school accreditation.
- D. Candidates may then proceed to complete a self-study, host a site visit, and demonstrate compliance and excellence according to the standards listed below. Candidates have one year from notification of their candidacy status (for initial or renewal accreditation) to submit their self-study.

SECTION 2

STANDARDS

To be granted ACCS accreditation subsequent to meeting the requirements for approval as a Candidate for Accreditation, a school must demonstrate that it has successfully met the following Criteria for Accreditation and that it can reasonably be expected to continue to achieve such.

A. Mission, Vision and Planning. The school must show evidence that it is and has been meeting its published school mission and goals, that its vision is consistent with the ACCS, and that it engages in a planning process.

A.I. Classical Christian Commitment: The school must demonstrate that it promotes itself as a classical Christian school, has a mission and vision statement, a statement of faith, that school programs incorporate these statements, and that it serves the cause of Christ consonant with the distinctives of ACCS.

a. Principle: A school must publish its mission and vision statement and statement of faith to inform parents of what the school is all about and for a degree of public accountability. This ensures that a) the school has drafted mission and vision statements and a statement of faith, and b) that the school is following each and all are consistent with those of ACCS.

b. **Indicators:**

- i. “Classical Christian” is prominent on the school's website and in its marketing materials.
- ii. “Preparatory school” language, if used, is clarified to emphasize a classical Christian priority.
- iii. Language in school documents that defines marriage, gender, and human sexuality according to historical biblical understanding.

c. **Documentation:** All must be published.

- i. Mission Statement
- ii. Vision Statement
- iii. Statement of Faith (must include a definition of marriage)
- iv. Explanation in the self study must describe how Scripture is integrated into school programs and curriculum

Previously required a five-year, long range plan.

A.2. Strategic planning: The school board has a mid-term and long-range plan for the overall improvement of the school.

- a. Principle: The school must have a board-developed and approved long-range plan in place that addresses future improvements in the school and which takes into account the facility and grounds, growing financial resources, curricular reviews, the effectiveness of the faculty to teach in a classical Christian method and the application of the Seven Laws of Teaching, constituent support and community outreach, tuition, salaries, and enrollment, among other needs of the school.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. The plan provides detail about who is responsible for different aspects and specifies timelines and targets.
 - ii. The plan covers a term of five years into the future.
- c. Documentation:
 - i. School's mid- and long-range plan
 - ii. Notes explaining how the plan was developed and how it is currently being used by the board and administration

A.3. Goals: The school must be able to document that its program is meeting its published goals for student achievement and advancement.

- a. Principle: Not only must a school publish what its goals are, but it must demonstrate in a concrete way that it is meeting those goals.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Periodic worldview interviews with students
- c. Documentation will include:
 - i. Philosophy of education
 - ii. Description of a graduate
 - iii. Results from parent surveys
 - iv. School profile (showing matriculations)
 - v. Do not include achievement test scores or high-school graduation requirements for this standard.

B. Accountability, Independence, and Stability. The school must demonstrate these qualities in several areas.

B.1. Financial Stability: The school must be able to document general stability with respect to financial resources and continuing constituent support for the school mission.

- a. Principle: ACCS wants to accredit a school that is viable. A school that demonstrates stability/growth, over time, in the areas listed above can generally be expected to continue to thrive in its operation.

- b. Indicators:
 - i. Accredited schools typically receive at least 80% of their income from student tuition.
- c. Documentation will show:
 - i. Annual budget (showing year to-date income and expenditures)
 - ii. Profit and loss statements for the past three to five years
 - iii. Note: Comments should explain whether or not a school is borrowing income from the following year to meet current year obligations.

Previously only addressed
a single donor, not a
single

B.2. Financial Independence: The school's financial support must not create an environment where a single donor (or a single external funding source) has the potential to threaten the future operation of the school by withdrawing support, or attaching new guidelines to funding that would threaten the school's mission. Similarly, if any single financial source through a third-party scholarship program or para-government organization represents a significant portion of the school's budget, it must not encumber or threaten the mission of the school.

- a. Principle: As previously stated, ACCS wants to accredit a school that is viable. The school must disclose its financial support and explain how these resources make the school viable in the long term. Also, the ACCS accredits schools that are independent and at which the board of directors can act without outside coercion, in the interest of the stated mission of the school.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Any donor or funding source controlled by a single entity, government, or person that makes up more than 20% of the operating budget.
 - ii. A clear, documented, and specific financial plan, should a single funding source be lost.
 - iii. A reserve fund equal to 10% of the annual operating budget.
- c. Documentation should include:
 - i. Anonymous list of donor contributions
 - ii. Budget that shows the total amount of donations relative to total budgeted revenue
 - iii. Report showing financial support and/or in-kind gifts from its constituency (which may include products and/or services) to the school, as well as all situations where any individual (or external source) contributes a significant portion of the budgeted school income per year
 - iv. An explanation of these financial arrangements and what they mean to the school

B.3. Legal Independence: The school seeks as much as possible to avoid any entanglements with the state (e.g., state funding and accreditation).

- a. Principle: The reason for this requirement is found in the ACCS position paper on vouchers, which states in brief, "the acceptance of vouchers would be a significant first step in bringing our schools under the direct control of an unbelieving civil magistrate" and therefore compromising the school's

independence. This standard does not address such government funded items as busing, milk money, or textbooks, which ACCS has not seen as an impediment to accreditation.

- b. Indicators:
 - i. The school will not be accredited if it accepts voucher funding as defined in policy 7.9.
 - ii. Defined: “Government vouchers are defined as a monetary payment made to or on behalf of parents of school age children by any agency of the civil government in the United States, whether federal, state or local, with that money to be used for tuition or tuition assistance in a private Christian academy.”
 - iii. ACCS may refer to “The ABCs of School Choice,” published by EdChoice, to help evaluate whether a funding program is a tax credit program, voucher program, etc.
- c. Documentation shall include:
 - i. School policies that address acceptance of government funding
 - ii. Published statements that express the school’s position on accepting government funding
 - iii. Financial document that shows source(s) of tuition revenue

B.4. Financial Accountability: The school must provide a financial accountability report verified by an independent accounting source.

- a. Principle: ACCS believes schools should operate with a high level of financial accountability. We also recognize that a formal “accounting audit” may be excessive and expensive for the required purpose. Therefore, at a minimum, an examination by an independent, qualified person, whether an accountant or bookkeeper not directly associated with the school, provides an objective look at how the school conducts its financial business internally. This type of accounting review is sufficient.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. An “independent, qualified person” may make recommendations to the school regarding how to improve its financial operations.
 - ii. The Financial Integrity Requirements (See Appendix B) provide the basis for this review.
- c. Documentation:
 - i. Include responses to the questions in the Financial Integrity Requirements provided separately.
 - ii. A CPA may not be the best source to complete this report. A person knowledgeable about business financial management and who is independent of the school will suffice.

B.5. Public Perception: The school must have been free of public ethical scandal or have taken appropriate action in resolving the same.

- a. Principle: ACCS does not want to represent as “accredited” a school that has an unresolved public ethical scandal. The operative word is “unresolved.” We all live in a sinful world, and so sin at some

point is not improbable for even an accredited school. The issue is how it is dealt with if it should occur.

- b. Indicator:
 - i. Any major conflict has been resolved, insofar as it depends on the member school within the boundaries of its mission and governance, at the time of application and accreditation.
- c. Documentation will provide:
 - i. A statement printed on school letterhead signed by the head of school or board chairman

B.6. Enrollment and Employment Stability: The school must disclose data for the past five years in the following areas along with an explanation of the trends and what they mean for the school: student enrollment and retention rates; retention of school administrators; teacher retention rate (year by year). Employee attrition and retention must indicate stability and support for the school mission.

- a. Principle: Total enrollment numbers for stable schools are generally consistent over time. However, stable schools sometimes see a decline in enrollment for a short time, for reasons related to maintaining faithfulness to the school's founding mission and vision. In such cases, schools should explain the reasons for such a decline.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Actual student enrollment numbers will equal budgeted student enrollment numbers.
 - ii. Student retention rates are greater than 80%. Use this formula: number of students who left the school between September 30th of the prior year and September 30th of the current year, not including graduates, as a percentage of the current year's overall enrollment.
 - iii. Student enrollment should not show an overall year-to-year decline of more than 10%.
- c. Documentation will include:
 - i. Enrollment numbers for the past five years showing grammar enrollment, secondary enrollment, and total enrollment
 - ii. Teacher retention rate for the past five years
 - iii. Administrator retention rate for the past five years

C. Governance and Administration. The school must have established adequate structures and procedures for governance and administration to achieve its mission.

C.1. Constitutional Organization: The school must have a written constitution and/or bylaws that clearly and comprehensively provide a basis for school administration and governance; lines of authority and areas of responsibility must be explicit.

- a. Principle: A school must know the reason for its existence, how it is structured, and the lines of authority so that it can operate smoothly and consistently. The adoption and publication of these

standards help develop a trusting relationship between the school and both parents and the local community.

b. Indicators:

i. Members of the staff are aware of the limits and extent of their decision-making authority.

c. Documentation:

i. School by-laws or similar documents must be included.

ii. Notes should explain the governance structure of the school. Also, identify specific sections of the by-laws that define items included in this standard.

C.2. Board Governance: The school must have a board of control that determines policy in the areas of administration, business management, academic affairs, and student life, as evidenced by a single, comprehensive policy manual. The board shall ensure that it manages conflict of interest issues in its own composition and its oversight of the school.

a. Principle: “Board members are the fiduciaries who steer the organization towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies, as well as by making sure the nonprofit has adequate resources to advance its mission” (National Council of Nonprofits). Regardless of the governance model used at the school, boards must demonstrate a focus on these duties as opposed to spending time on the day-to-day operations of the school. This requirement does not preclude conflict of interest issues for board members, but does require that there be a mechanism for managing conflict of interest issues.

b. Indicators:

i. The policy manual is referenced and understood by members of the administrative team. In other words, it is demonstrated that the manual is not a “dust collector,” but is actually used.

c. Documentation:

i. Policy manual (or other governance documents)

ii. Board minutes for the last 6 to 12 months

iii. Identify the location for the conflict of interest policy. See the sample Conflict of Interest policy at the National Council of Nonprofits website.)

iv. Notes should explain where all policies exist, i.e., is there a separate policy manual or do policies exist in handbooks? If policies are in the faculty or parent-student handbook, include them as well. Identify the specific sections in these documents that address items in this standard.

C.3. Records: The school must have complete, accurate, legible, and securely maintained records. These are to include board minutes, school personnel files, student files, and administrative reports.

a. Principle: A school must be able to professionally document what it is doing as well as provide for the privacy of the people it is serving. Security is required for certain documents such as student

records and teacher performance reports, while other documents are more public in nature such as board minutes (usually). The school must demonstrate its maturity and professionalism by providing adequate handling procedures for all records.

- b. Indicators:
 - i. Show a record plan for electronic records that provides for security and backup.
 - ii. Files should demonstrate completeness, all documentation is in one location, and a standard organization for each type of file.
- c. Documentation: This will be evaluated during the site visit.
 - i. Notes should identify where these records are stored. Visit committees will examine records for completeness and consistent organization.
 - ii. Notes should also identify any policy that defines general record retention policies.

C.4. Conflict Resolution: The school must have constructed and promulgated biblical and public policies for resolving school conflicts concerning policies, administrators, faculty, and students.

- a. Principle: Although not all possible situations can be anticipated, a general process for locally addressing conflicts at/within the school are mandatory because Jesus said that all men will know His disciples by how they treat one another in love. The Bible provides general guidelines for addressing/resolving conflict, and these need to be followed by those who are in submission to Christ. Where there are a large number of people, there will be sin. Schools must prepare for inevitable conflicts and develop principled guidelines in anticipation of difficulties, not in reaction to them.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. In general, policies should have conflict dealt with between the affected parties, and then bring in an appropriate chain of command if the grievance escalates.
 - ii. Grievances found in the official record should show examples of the organizational adherence to these principles.
- c. Documentation will include:
 - i. Policy Manual
 - ii. Faculty Handbook
 - iii. Parent-Student Handbook
 - iv. Notes that identify the location of the grievance policy in the handbooks

C.5. Executive Leadership: The school's head administrator must have a clear job description, obviously act as the liaison between the board and staff, and be sufficiently available to the teachers for support and guidance. Schools must have a policy ensuring that the head of school receives an annual evaluation from the board. Boards must complete an annual evaluation for the head of school.

- a. Principle: Just as Christ is the head of the Church, there was a chief priest in the Old Testament temple system, and as a husband is the head of a family, so too a school as an organization must follow this pattern with a single leader/representative as the head of school. He represents the school to the board, the board to the school, and the school to the community. He may have others to support and aid him in this task, but he is the leader of the entire school and accountable for its sound operation. He provides uniformity and consistency in the day-to-day operation of the school. A well-written job description protects both the administrator and the board.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Have a written set of attributes or virtues that are aspirational for the head of school position.
 - ii. Schools are expected to have one head administrator.
- c. Documentation will show:
 - i. Head of school job description
 - ii. Document or policy outlining process for head of school's annual evaluation
 - iii. Note whether or not the head of school has received a formal evaluation from the board in each of the past five years (those completed evaluations should NOT be included in the self-study)

New standard C.6. Board of Directors: Board members must meet ACCS and documented school standards for their office and must be able to articulate, at an appropriate level, the classical Christian vision for their school. The board must show adequate training for all board members in classical Christian philosophy and school board practices as common to long-term ACCS-accredited schools.

- a. Principle: Board members, collectively, are the guardians of the vision and success for the school. Classical Christian Education's paradigm challenges the common understanding of school to such a degree that vision drift is easy and common. For this reason, board members must be carefully selected and trained to understand, appreciate, and deeply support the foundations of the classical Christian vision.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Board members sign a statement of faith and conflict of interest statement.
 - ii. A training plan for board classical Christian philosophy and function is in place and practiced.
 - iii. Board selection processes will require prospective members to learn and show that they understand classical Christian philosophy and pedagogy.
 - iv. All board members are regularly engaged in learning, particularly about classical Christian education through demonstrated participation in ACCS conference attendance, selected readings in classical Christian education, webinar or onsite training, mentoring, conference recordings, attendance at parent education events, OR other training and development.

- v. Annual improvement activities are conducted including board self-evaluations or readings on board best practices.
 - c. Documentation:
 - i. Policies regarding the qualifications, election, and training of board members will be included.
- C.7. Compliance with the Law:** The school must meet state and local health, safety, and security requirements as well as any state statutory requirements for operating a private school.
- a. Principle: The state, county, and municipal authorities have requirements for health and safety which, in general, are consistent with a biblical view of civil government, and ACCS desires to support these requirements when they are not in conflict with Scripture. Schools have a responsibility “in loco parentis” to provide for the physical well-being of students entrusted to their care.
 - b. Indicators:
 - i. How does the school comply with the state’s compulsory education law (for example, number of school days)?
 - c. Documentation:
 - i. Documentation should identify the state and local requirements for private schools.
 - ii. Health: Note requirements and compliance with vaccination reporting. For example, if your school is required to do CPR or concussion training, please document this.
 - iii. Safety: Include certificates from annual fire inspections or building inspections and any risk management reports.
 - iv. Security: Show emergency management or disaster response plans and training.
 - v. State laws: Demonstrate requirements and compliance with laws concerning length of the school year and other requirements specified by the state in which the school resides.

New section

D. Cultivation of Student Virtue (II Peter 1:5–6, Phil 4:8) and the School Community. The school must recognize that its missional success is tied to a systemic school community, and that all aspects of the school’s operation should seek to bring about the cultivation of Christian virtue and living.

New standard

D.1. Admissions Process: The school must exercise family and student admissions and retention policies that are consistent with the school’s mission (missional or covenantal), and that support a biblical Christian ethos of the school.

- a. Principle: Schools are made up of students, faculty, and programs. Each plays a vital role in forming paideia in students. If families enroll that uphold values in juxtaposition with the school community, they will disrupt the school’s ethos. In other words, students will be in conflict over acceptance of what is taught, and what is present in the community. This is particularly evident with false values around LGBT inclusion or non-Christian enrollment (Mormon, Muslim).

- b. Indicators:
 - i. Careful admissions policies that screen students based on specific criteria are in place.
 - ii. The person responsible for family interviews can articulate the types of families the school admits and how he or she determines their qualification.
- c. Documentation should show:
 - i. Written admissions policies and guidelines that describe the school's goals with respect to the religious makeup or the constituency of the school.
 - ii. Written admissions policies and guidelines that may include direction regarding unbelievers or those who openly practice non-biblical life choices.

New standard.D.2. Aesthetics: The school must apply appropriate aesthetic standards to its classrooms, hallways, facilities, programs, and staff.

- a. Principle: The standards of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty are humane, intertwined, and God-given. Students, faculty, and parents are influenced greatly by aesthetic standards. “Higher” rather than “vulgar” (low) standards help create a learning environment that depicts transcendence. Classical influences in art help to ground classical schools in the transcendent. While not the only “beautiful” form of art, the classical forms of music, art, performance, and architecture are less likely to reflect modern false-values connected with individualistic expression.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Schools should demonstrate the application of their educational philosophy through the school's decor.
 - ii. The Western canon of thought (writings and great books), literature, fine art, theater, and music are used in such a way as to build appreciation and affection for them.
 - iii. Important and classical works of great art are given prominent place and presence in the school environment. Older forms that were based in a pursuit of ideal truth, goodness, and beauty are elevated examples. Products of twentieth- and twenty-first-century art and music are rightly assessed and ordered in the school environment, with earlier art given more prominence. Modern works tend to be subjective and individualistic in nature.
- c. Documentation: This will primarily be evaluated during the on-site visit.
 - i. If the school has relevant documentation, such as an aesthetic vision or directions to teachers on classroom decor, that could be included here.
 - ii. Most curricular items will be included in the curriculum guide. A listing of example items not included in the curriculum guide such as theatrical plays, ambient music choices, or music chosen for chapel (or equivalent) will be helpful.

- iii. Include examples of liturgical readings, hymns, or other sacred songs formally used in the community.

New standard

D.3. Habits and Manners: Habits, manners, and decorum of the students and staff should comport with Christian and Western tradition appropriate to the mission of the school.

- a. Principle: Schools help to transfer a way of life (Ephesians 6:4, Proverbs 22:6). Habits practiced from an early age often become part of a person's nature and often become common practice in a Christian community. One of the great educational errors of our age is the notion that education is merely information and skills transfer. Schools must work against this widely held pressure as they cultivate the soul to love truth, goodness, and beauty. Classical Christian education is concerned with the moral and spiritual training schools provide to students.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Order and joy should be evident throughout the school community.
 - ii. Classroom and school-wide practices in manners and politeness should be evident.
 - iii. As appropriate, regular practices in prayer, song, and memory should be present in the school day.
 - iv. Student dress code and grooming standards should be documented, and consistent with the principles above.
- c. Documentation:
 - i. Policies or written expectations for students should include:
 - Habits / liturgies / etiquette
 - Uniforms
 - Order
 - Observed joy

New standard

D.4. Activities: Non-classroom activities are consistent with the school's vision for providing moral and spiritual training to students.

- a. Principle: Virtue formation requires that all school-sponsored events are aligned with the vision and mission of a classical school.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. How do your activities flow out of your mission and vision statements?
 - ii. Expectation for student behavior in activities is commensurate with expectations in the school.
 - iii. Spiritual qualifications, conduct, and discipleship practices for coaches are comparable to spiritual standards for teachers.
- c. Documentation will include:
 - i. Handbooks or guidelines for coaches or other supervisors of co-curricular activities

- ii. Policies on student's participation in these activities
- iii. Hiring policies for coaches, etc., or a list of qualifications for staff holding these positions

D.5. Discipline: The school has and adheres to adequate overall discipline and behavioral standards.

- a. Principle: The school must have a policy or policies that define how discipline is effectively established and consistently maintained at the school. It should be evident to visitors in the hallways and on the playground as well as in the classrooms. Schools must establish a well-ordered environment that facilitates instruction and learning. Students also learn many lessons by the manner in which discipline is handled at the school.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Clearly communicated standards like postings, handbooks, etc.
 - ii. Environment of student respectfulness toward adults, and staff toward their respective authorities.
 - iii. Male/female students exercise appropriate discretion in their relationships.
- c. Documentation: The practical application will be observed during the on-site visit.
 - i. Notes should identify the policies related to student discipline in the policy manual, faculty manual, and parent-student handbook.

New standard D.6. Male and Female Roles: The school encourages male/female roles that are consistent with biblical Christian virtues. Leadership is encouraged in different ways between boys and girls.

- a. Principle: "God created them male and female." The distortions of our age often cause us to ignore important Christian distinctions in the virtues and the roles of men and women. Christians affirm the equality of the sexes, while rejecting the "sameness" of the sexes, either in nature or purpose. Part of cultivating virtue is to appropriate the right virtues and to help students live according to scriptural standards.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Practice and training in manners, with male/female distinctive roles.
 - ii. Policies against ambiguous dress and/or other grooming styles that may promote ambiguous appearance among students.
 - iii. In sports or PE, boys and girls do not compete in ways that might encourage boys to be rough with girls.
 - iv. Events that focus on distinctives between the sexes, for example, protocol events, social events, etc.
- c. Documentation should include:
 - i. Examples of indicative policies in training, handbooks, communications, activities, or manuals
 - ii. Operational documents outlining the philosophy or practice for dances, dating, etc.

D.7. In Loco Parentis: Parents are the authority from which the school operates and must therefore work in concert with the school in educating their children.

- a. Principle: God calls parents, specifically fathers, to raise their children in the education of the Lord (Ephesians 6, Deuteronomy 6). As schools, our authority must therefore be delegated from the parents, not the state or the church.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Fathers, in particular, are held to some account for addressing school-related concerns.
 - ii. Enrollment documents make this responsibility clear to parents.
 - iii. The school has policies that, by enrolling, parents are joining with the school and delegating authority. If they will not support key aspects of school policy, they are advised not to enroll.
- c. Documentation will show:
 - i. Public documents or communication stating the school's in loco parentis position
 - ii. Communications to parents that educate them about the school's mission, vision, and programs

E. Academics. The school must provide adequate classical Christian curriculum requirements to achieve its mission. The content and goals of the entire curriculum should be challenging and of high quality.

E.i. Sayers and Gregory: Instructional and teaching methods should reflect an understanding, application, and value for those ideas described by Dorothy Sayers in "The Lost Tools of Learning" and by John Milton Gregory in *The Seven Laws of Teaching*.

- a. Principle: The recovery of classical Christian education is based on the Trivium, the first three of the seven liberal arts. Dorothy Sayers drew important observations from the Trivium as she described medieval education. She also correlates the Trivium to the developmental stages of a child: Poll-parrot (grammar stage), Pert (logic stage), and Poetic (rhetoric stage).
 - i. From the earliest days of the movement, *The Seven Laws of Teaching* were helpful in describing a core set of timeless and fundamental pedagogical practices. The ACCS is committed to the "Seven Laws of Teaching" as described by John Milton Gregory.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. There should be regular reviews of the Seven Laws. Adherence to the laws will go a long way to ensuring that the school is offering high-quality instruction.
 - ii. Grammatical methods should be clearly applied at all levels of the grammar stage, dialectic techniques should be used throughout that level, and rhetoric practically observed in the upper grades.
 - iii. Sayers' various methods of instruction associated with each aspect of the Trivium should be evident at the appropriate stages of development/student instruction.
 - iv. Gregory's seven laws should be evident throughout all stages of the Trivium in each classroom, as well as in teacher evaluations and teacher training sessions.

- v. The tools of learning are integrated with classroom observation forms or teacher evaluation forms. Include those forms here.
 - c. Documents:
 - i. This will be observed during classroom instruction as part of the on-site visit.
 - ii. Training plans and records of past training should include material consistent with Sayers and Gregory.
- E.2. Program and Graduation Requirements:** The complete school program inclusive of graduation requirements must be well-organized, realistic, and publicized in its entirety.
- a. Principle: Schools seeking accreditation should be able to address in detail what is required in the way of coursework, credits, and accomplishments for a student to graduate from their school. In addition, these criteria must be published where parents and others can readily find them, and they must be consistent with the ACCS mission and vision. By establishing graduation requirements, a school demonstrates that it has considered both the scope and the culmination of its academic program.
 - b. Indicators:
 - i. A rhetorical thesis presentation required for every graduate (not specifically a senior thesis).
 - c. Documentation will show:
 - i. Published high-school graduation requirements
 - ii. Description of Diploma tracks. All ACCS-authorized diplomas must have requirements that meet ACCS academic standards. Certificates of completion are not considered diplomas.
- E.3. Complete Curriculum:** The school must provide adequate classical Christian curriculum requirements to achieve its mission. The content and goals of the entire curriculum should be challenging and of high quality. The entire curriculum must be documented in a clear and specific manner within the school's curriculum guide(s).
- a. Principle: The original Latin meaning of curriculum is "the course, the path, the road." A school must know what it is teaching in each class at each grade level. This information is contained in the school's curriculum guide(s). Curriculum guides demonstrate planning and are an effective means for the school to provide accountability for the content of classroom instruction.
 - b. Indicators:
 - i. The curriculum guide must be a published document that has been approved by the proper authority at the school.
 - ii. Curriculum materials should be detailed enough to guide classroom instruction. This is most often accomplished through the inclusion of objectives, though not excessively.
 - iii. Good discussion questions are part of the written curriculum.
 - iv. A documented sequence over time is necessary to create pacing for teachers within the curriculum.

- v. The objective of a lesson includes virtue development as well as knowledge and skill development. “The student will know” and “The student will be able to” are not the only, or even the primary, purpose of education.
- c. Documentation should include:
 - i. Curriculum guides for grammar and secondary school
 - ii. A document that shows all courses taught in the grammar and secondary schools
 - iii. One example from one specific course showing how curriculum planning fulfills the school’s goal for a graduate

E.4. Academic Program Requirements: The academic program must require the following for all students:

E.4.A Phonics: For all schools in their elementary academic program, instruction in reading through use of phonics

- a. Principle: Teaching children how to pronounce new words is essential to developing reading skills. “English is a phonetic language, which a child can quickly learn to read if he or she is taught the sounds of the various letters or combinations of letters” (Wilson, *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning*, p. 31). “Phonics involves matching the sounds of spoken English with individual letters or groups of letters. For example, the sound k can be spelled as c, k, ck or ch. Teaching children to blend the sounds of letters together helps them decode unfamiliar or unknown words by sounding them out. For example, when a child is taught the sounds for the letters t, p, a and s, they can start to build up the words: “tap”, “taps”, “pat”, “pats” and “sat” (National Literacy Trust).
- b. Indicators:
 - i. A phonics-based reading curriculum in K, 1st, and 2nd. However, some “sight words” consistent with phonics pedagogy are expected
 - ii. The absence of whole-word-based pedagogy in grammar school
- c. Documentation:
 - i. Provide notes that identify the sections in the grammar curriculum guide that includes phonics instruction.

E.4.B Latin or Greek: At least four years of Latin or Greek instruction, with at least two years in the secondary (i.e., after sixth grade),

Note: A year is generally understood to be 120 hours of class time with an instructor over the course of an academic year, i.e., a Carnegie unit.

- a. Principle: For membership, ACCS requires that a school teach at least two years of Latin or ancient Greek. Because ACCS accreditation has a higher bar than membership, accredited schools must require a minimum of four years of either language, with at least two of those years after the sixth

grade. Teaching these languages also helps students develop their writing skills and facilitates their participation in the “great conversation” of Western civilization.

b. Indicators:

i. This refers to requirements for students attending the school K–12.

c. Documentation:

i. Provide notes that identify the pages in the curriculum guides for the Latin courses. Notes should specify the number of days per week and the length of class periods for Latin courses.

E.4.C Logic and Rhetoric: For all schools in their secondary education, provide at least one year each of formal logic and formal rhetoric.

Note: A year is generally understood to be 120 hours of class time with an instructor over the course of an academic year, i.e., a Carnegie unit.

a. Principle: Logic and rhetoric are two elements in the Trivium, and should influence the teaching methods throughout their respective phases. As specific courses, logic and rhetoric provide students with some of the most powerful tools of learning. These requirements reflect only the bare minimum for membership in ACCS.

b. Indicators:

i. In addition to the time requirement cited here, it is expected that logical and rhetorical tools will be integrated into other courses. This standard presumes such integration; however, this standard requires discrete instruction in logic and rhetoric.

ii. A rhetorical thesis presentation is required for every graduate (not specifically a senior thesis).

c. Documentation:

i. Provide notes that identify the pages in the curriculum guides for the logic and rhetoric courses. Notes should specify the number of days per week and the length of class periods for logic and rhetoric courses.

ii. High-school graduation requirements should address these courses.

E.4.D Western Civilization: Significant study in Western history and a canon of Western literature,

a. Principle: Because history is the revelation of God’s created order in time and on earth, and because the ACCS mission “is both to promote the classical approach, and provide accountability for member schools to ensure that our cultural heritage is not lost again,” we require schools to teach children their Christian heritage which has developed predominantly through the West.

b. Indicators:

i. Many schools have found benefit in using more primary sources than textbooks in the secondary.

ii. Children’s literature used in the classroom represents the classical canon for children.

- iii. The secondary school has students read a significant portion of the Western canon of works in translations as close to the original as practical.
 - iv. Socratic and ethical discourse are evident in the treatment of great texts.
 - v. The school's definition of the "Western Canon" is based in some accepted tradition (Harvard Classics, The Great Books of the Western World, generally accepted tradition, etc.)
- c. Documentation:
- i. Notes should identify at least some of the areas in the curriculum guides that relate to these subjects. Notes should also describe when students receive training in these subjects.
 - ii. List the Western Canon texts read in grades 7–12.

E.4.E Writing: Training in writing (both prose and poetry), grammar, spelling, and composition

- a. Principle: Because ACCS wants graduates who are capable communicators, which includes their ability to write, this requirement is included and reflects the need for instruction at all levels of the Trivium, from the early grammar stage where students learn spelling and English grammar, to the rhetoric years where compositions are required. The rhetoric stage presumes that students now have independent thoughts and ideas and that these students must be taught to communicate eloquently and persuasively.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Prose and poetry should be apparent at all stages of the Trivium in an age-appropriate format. (progymnasmata).
 - ii. Writing practices will incorporate logical defense and the classical rhetorical form (reference progymnasmata, Cicero, Quintilian).
- c. Documentation:
 - i. Notes should identify courses in the curriculum guides where students are taught to write poetry and prose. Also, remember to include student writing in the samples of student work.

E.4.F Bible: Training in the Scriptures will include a well-integrated scriptural understanding of all subjects.

- a. Principle: ACCS is committed to the restoration of our Christian culture which is grounded on the Bible. It is necessary that ACCS schools have courses that study the Bible, but that by itself is not sufficient. As this standard indicates, biblical integration is essential.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. The Scriptures must permeate every course of instruction since all knowledge derives from Christ (Col. 2:3).
 - ii. Teachers take advantage of the natural opportunities in their lessons to integrate Scripture, while respecting the plain context of the scriptural passage. It is not expected that every lesson observed by the visit committee will include scriptural integration.

- c. Documentation: This will also be evaluated during the site visit.
 - i. Notes should identify courses where students receive training in the Scriptures. Also include information that tells what Bible reading students complete. Give examples of how the Scriptures are integrated into other subjects.

E.4.G Mathematics: Training is required in general mathematics, arithmetic, algebra, and geometry, at a minimum, with trigonometry offered, but not required.

- a. Principle: God is the source of order in the universe, and it is expected that proficiency with numbers is necessary for a graduate from an accredited ACCS school. Note that both arithmetic and geometry are liberal arts. While mathematical rigor is encouraged, the specific course selections should be consonant with the mission of the school.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Students are required to complete through Algebra II and have an option to take a pre-calculus course.
 - ii. Math teachers understand the unique contribution of the quadrivium in its relationship to the classical liberal arts.
- c. Documentation:
 - i. Notes should identify courses where students receive training in math. Also provide an explanation as to what courses are required and what are elective courses.

E.4.H Science: Training in general science, biology, chemistry, and an opportunity to take physics, science instruction supports student's faith in Scripture.

- a. Principle: All order in creation derives from the Creator, and it is important to ensure students have a rudimentary understanding of how that creation is structured. These courses provide that rudimentary level of knowledge and understanding. Wherever practical, these subjects should be taught in a form consistent with natural philosophy and natural history, the classical tradition that orients the natural world to its relationship with the divine Creator's form and purpose.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Students interviewed by the visit committee will demonstrate confidence in the truth of Scripture, especially as they express personal beliefs in creation.
 - ii. Scientism (the belief that the scientific method is the path to ultimate truth) is identified and refuted in favor of knowing God through His natural revelation.
- c. Documentation:
 - i. Notes should identify courses where students receive training in science. Also provide an explanation as to what courses are required and what are elective courses.
 - ii. Include policy or guidelines instructing teachers how to present creation.

E.4.I Theology:

- a. Principle: Historically, theology has been considered the “queen of the Sciences.” In other words, the study of God leads to all other knowledge. For this reason, classical Christian schools should train and teach either in the historic tradition of theology or in the narrower field of apologetics. Apologetics is instruction in how to give a defense of the Christian faith; it addresses the antithesis between Christ and all other religions, and how every thought needs to be brought captive to the lordship of Christ.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Sound biblical and theological components are regular components of discussions in all subjects.
- c. Documentation:
 - i. Notes should identify the pages in the curriculum guide for the apologetics course **or training in theology**. Course objectives and textbook materials should also be included.

Standards for art and music have been separated.

E.4.J.a Art: The curriculum includes required instruction in the theory and practice of the visual arts during the grammar stage and the logic stage. Rhetoric-stage students are required to earn some credits in fine arts.

- a. Principle: ACCS is committed to truth, beauty, and goodness. These traits are found in every course, but are the very heart of this requirement. “Visual art” refers to drawing, painting, sculpture, etc. “Fine arts” include the five historic arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry, as well as the performing arts of theatre and dance. Fine arts also includes modern forms such as film, photography, and design. “Training in the arts” does not include art appreciation, which would be considered “general instruction.”
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Students receive instruction in visual arts in the grammar and logic school.
 - ii. Graduation requirements include requirement for training in fine arts in the rhetoric school.
 - iii. Art appreciation is embedded or included throughout the trivium.
- c. Documentation:
 - i. Notes should identify visual arts training courses (not appreciation courses) required during the grammar and logic stage of the Trivium. Identify the sections of the curriculum guides for these courses.

E.4.J.b Music: Have a written description (or curriculum) of the required instruction in the theory and practice of music at each stage of the Trivium. (Instruction defined above “does not have to be a class.”)

- a. Principle: ACCS is committed to truth, beauty, and goodness. These traits are found in every course, but are the very heart of this requirement. Music can be inclusive of instrumental or vocal training.

“Training in the arts” does not include music appreciation, which would be considered “general instruction.”

b. Indicators:

i. Students receive instruction in music in the grammar, logic, and rhetoric schools.

c. Documentation:

i. Notes should identify the music training courses (not appreciation courses) required during each stage of the Trivium. Identify the sections of the curriculum guides for these courses.

E.5. Academic Evaluation and Assessment: The academic program will be regularly evaluated by documented, annual administration of an appropriate, nationally recognized, standardized exam and other academic assessments that reflect classical pedagogy.

a. Principle: ACCS wants an objective means for our schools to evaluate how they are doing in instructing their students. Again, this criterion does not require that students be tested at each grade level, but only that they be tested at some regular, but unspecified intervals. Assessment using humane, thought-oriented oral, written, and discourse methods is also desired.

b. Indicators:

i. Testing assesses verbal and quantitative reasoning (sometimes called critical reading, math concepts, etc.) which are influenced by the classical method.

ii. ACCS encourages schools to utilize the ERB CTP-5 standardized test but allows any of the others commonly available on the market, as long as the test does not direct the school's programs toward a state-standard like the Common Core.

iii. The ACCS recommends the use of the Classic Learning Test wherever appropriate.

c. Documentation:

i. Provide copies of class score reports as received from the testing service.

ii. Schools may also add their own internally created reports. If so, be sure to identify what scores are being reported and how results were calculated. Does the school have targets for student learning; if so, what scores are used to measure this growth?

iii. Most importantly, schools should explain how schools utilize test results. Is testing being conducted to appease parents? Are scores used to evaluate instruction, learning, or curriculum? Has the school completed an analysis to see how well the written curriculum, the taught curriculum, and the test curriculum match?

F. Faculty and Instructional Resources. The school must have sufficient faculty, instructional, and facility resources to achieve its mission.

F.1. Faculty Requirements: The school must demonstrate that each of its faculty meets the school's written requirements for the position(s) that they hold.

- a. Principle: A school must have written requirements for hiring teachers which include either a specific job description or general standards of conduct, knowledge and teaching ability consistent with the subjects which the person has been hired to teach. These documents communicate that the school has considered what qualities are inherent in successful teachers and is thoughtfully applying these standards in hiring practices.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. ACCS-accredited schools have found greater success hiring inexperienced teachers who don't require re-training. A preference for hiring long-term public school teachers with experience suggests a lack of understanding of the distinctives of classical Christian pedagogy. It's very hard to successfully re-train a teacher.
 - ii. Teachers must be professing Christians who know the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior (John 3:3, 1 Peter 1:23). Staff must be in agreement with and adhere to the school's Statement of Faith as part of the qualifications for their position of employment.
- c. Documentation:
 - i. Include updated documentation as provided with the application for candidacy status (list of teachers, academic degrees, and classes taught).
 - ii. Show school's hiring policy (or documentation that defines qualifications to be a full-time teacher).
 - iii. Notes and documentation should explain the school's policy and requirements for mandatory enrollment of children of full-time employees.
 - iv. Notes should explain whether or not the school conducts criminal background checks on applicants.

F.2. Class Size: The school must show that its program for assigning teaching responsibilities and student-faculty ratio is consonant with its stated goals. ACCS expects schools to be consistent with their own policy. ACCS does not have a specified class size. Schools have adopted class sizes for enhanced marketing, for facility limitations, or for tradition. ACCS recognizes that the adopted class size has a direct correlation on teacher salaries.

- a. Principle: The school must have a policy that specifically defines how many students are assigned to a teacher. It is also important to note how many classes a teacher is assigned to teach each day, and what the allotted preparation time is for each class. The school wants to ensure that it is not running good teachers into the ground and as a consequence hampering student instruction.

- b. Indicators:
 - i. Overall student/teacher ratios for the school, maximum class size, and other limits on class size are published and followed.
- c. Documentation should indicate:
 - i. Policy on class size (or a published statement on class size used to market the school to prospective parents)
 - ii. Class rosters from the previous or current year
 - iii. About how many prep periods full-time grammar and secondary school teachers receive during the week

F.3. Books and Ad Fontes: An obvious love and respect for reading and books should be evident throughout the entire school's program. For example, there should be a wide variety of literature available to the students in classroom and/or school libraries.

- a. Principle: Christians are people of The Book. We put a high priority on the written word because God has done so in providing us with the Scriptures. There should be a visible emphasis placed on the importance of reading from the head administrator down, and on the quality and quantity of books available to students at each grade level.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Books in the school's holdings are curated for quality.
 - ii. Students have ready access to "Great Books," original source material, and reference texts.
- c. Documentation: This will be observed during the on-site visit.
 - i. If the school has a summer reading program, include descriptive information here.

F.4. Teacher Development: The school must have an established, ongoing teacher development program, which is consistent with the ACCS vision, and should include taking advantage of ACCS-approved conferences, training, audio/video recordings, and/or materials.

- a. Principle: Because what ACCS is doing has not been done for well over a century and a half, we are working to re-establish a classroom model that has been essentially expunged and for which none of us has any personal recollection. Teacher training is essential to help prepare teachers and hone their teaching skills for the classroom. This is an ongoing need, not a one-time event. Teachers need to be continually challenged to think in terms that are not common to their past experience and instruction outside of ACCS.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Teachers are able to describe the training program and how they participate in it.
 - ii. The content of teacher training and development is unique to classical and/or Christian education.
- c. Documentation:

- i. Show schedules from teacher training meetings provided during summer orientation programs as well as during the school year.

New standard

F.5. Classroom Observation: The school shall have written procedures that describe regular and ongoing supervision and classroom observation of all teachers. Policies should require written year-end evaluations for every teacher.

- a. Principle: Regular and ongoing supervision of teachers is necessary to ensure teachers continue to teach classically.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. Completed faculty evaluations include items for teachers to improve on. Evaluations don't solely consist of praise and positive affirmations.
- c. Documentation should include:
 - i. Faculty Handbook, which shows policy addressing observation and supervision of teachers
 - ii. Job description of the administrator assigned these responsibilities
 - iii. Description of specific faculty training
 - iv. Summary of specific faculty observations conducted during the previous year

G. Student Work Samples. The school must provide sample student work along with the self-study.

- a. Principle: This provides the visit committee with another means to evaluate the school.
- b. Documentation: Include scanned copies of student work in these areas:
 - i. Assignments that show instruction in phonics
 - ii. Writing assignments from all levels, especially ones showing teacher corrections, including two from logic school and two from rhetoric school
 - iii. Examples of poetry writing from all levels
 - iv. Examples of tests from all levels
 - v. Assignments from Latin
 - vi. Assignments from logic
 - vii. A senior thesis (from rhetoric)
 - viii. Photos of student art work

H. Exceptional Standards.

H.1. Teacher Certification: (Renewal Only) The school must provide a record of the implementation of the school's teacher certification plan and the status of each teacher in that plan. (See Appendix H, p. 64.)

- a. Principle: The ACCS accreditation standards require that schools applying for ACCS accreditation agree to actively participate in the ACCS teacher certification process. This standard ensures that ACCS accredited schools are actually doing so.
- b. Indicators:
 - i. The teachers are aware of their certification level and how it impacts them.
- c. Documentation:
 - i. Provide teacher certification plan.
 - ii. Show status of teachers in the school's plan.
 - iii. Note: The school must submit its teacher certification plan to the ACCS Director of Accreditation for review and approval. The ACCS plan was updated in June, 2016.

H.2. Addressing Recommendations and Discrepancies: (Renewal Only) Provide a letter from the school explaining the correction of each discrepancy and any action taken on each recommendation. (This requirement is found on the application for accreditation renewal.)

- a. Principle: Schools submit this letter as part of the application for school renewal accreditation. To ensure that the Visit Committee receives this information, the same letter submitted with the application should be included here.
- b. Documentation:
 - i. Provide a letter explaining the correction of each discrepancy and any action taken on each recommendation.

I. State Guidelines: See Appendix D for additional requirements for these states:

1. Georgia School Accreditation
2. Tennessee School Accreditation
3. Texas State School Accreditation
4. Virginia Council for Private Education

J. Requests for Substitutions or Adjustments:

In rare cases, a particular school does not comply with one of the accreditation standards. For example, a missional, service-oriented inner city school funded through private contributions may not conform to indicators for tuition-based funding. Or, a school's mission may serve learning-disabled students who may not conform to all requirements.

In such cases, schools should include requests for adjustments with the application for candidacy status. Such adjustments are only granted when the school is deemed to be in a highly unique situation and they have missional (not practical) reasons for requesting the adjustments.

Exceptions required because the school has a non-traditional model are covered under “Endorsements.”

K. Exemptions for Endorsements. Several types of schools have a set of modifications listed in Appendix A of this document. These schools hold “Endorsements” for specific types of activities. The following non-traditional schedule endorsements are considered:

- i. Non-traditional schedule: university model, partial week, year round, or other schools that do not serve students in a classroom for more than 25 hours per week, or less than 150 days per year.

SECTION 3

ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES

This section describes the full procedure through which a school becomes accredited once the school has applied for accreditation and has achieved candidacy status.

A. Self-Study Documentation. The school applying for accreditation must submit a self-study that substantiates how the school meets or exceeds each of the **Criteria for Accreditation**. Schools combine an electronic version of the Criteria for Accreditation, with documents (“show”) **and** brief explanations (“tell”) to create the documentation package. This documentation package must be postmarked **no later than one year** from the date of the school’s notification of having been approved as a Candidate for Accreditation, and sent to the ACCS Director of Accreditation for initial review and feedback. Failure to do so will likely result in the termination of the school’s approval as a Candidate for Accreditation. This will require that the school restart the process and forfeit any fees already paid. Extensions may be granted in rare, special situations.

1. Two reviews of the self-study are commonly done. During the first review, the director of accreditation will review the self-study and send the review back to the school. The review will identify any work that needs to be completed and help the school to correct omissions. Typically, potential discrepancies are identified in this review. (Note: not all discrepancies included in the accreditation report are identified during the self-study review.) Suggestions for making the self-study easier to review by the visit committee are also included. Schools send the revised self-study back to the director of accreditation. The second review by the director of accreditation will focus primarily on items noted in the first review. Upon receiving a response from the second review, the director of accreditation will, at his discretion, advance to the next step in the process.
2. In the event that the school believes an adjustment or exception is needed to one of the standards based upon the self-study evaluation, the school’s designated representative may send a letter of appeal to the director of accreditation. The director may choose to accommodate the school’s request, or he may choose to escalate the matter to the ACCS President, who may approve the request, or forward the request to the ACCS Board of Directors. The board would consider the appeal at the next quarterly meeting. A decision on the matter will be passed through the president of the ACCS to the director of accreditation. The purpose of this process is to prevent such appeals from a first hearing after the expense of the visit.
3. Once any deficiencies noted in the director of accreditation’s review have been addressed, the school will be directed to send a copy of the documentation package to each member of an accreditation committee appointed by the director of accreditation. The following time-line and guidance applies:

- a. The director of accreditation will request dates for the visit at least three to four months out to allow time for identifying the accreditation committee and time for them to review the school's documentation package.
 - b. Schools must provide all required/requested documentation directly to the visiting committee members at least three months prior to a desired visit. The director of accreditation will also provide any comments from his review to the committee.
 - c. The committee shall be given one month to read through all material prior to any flights being arranged. This will allow time for the committee to evaluate the suitability of a visit to the school based on the documentation review.
 - d. After reviewing the materials, the visit committee chair will inform the director of accreditation as to whether or not the committee believes a visit is warranted. If not, then the director of accreditation will notify the school with the stated reasons, and allow the school up to six months to address the indicated problems. If a school fails to address the problems, by default, the school must begin the process anew.
4. Once the committee agrees that the school merits a visit, the director of accreditation will notify the school to make local arrangements for the visit and have the committee members make their travel arrangements.

B. Accreditation Committee and Site Visit.

1. On-site visits by an accreditation committee are required for accreditation.
2. An accreditation committee will be appointed by the director of accreditation. The committee will be composed of three or four people from among the ACCS Board of Directors (current or former, including former ACCS board members who have had experience on an ACCS Accreditation Committee), the director of accreditation, the headmaster (or equivalent) or administrator of an ACCS-accredited school, or administrators who have served at an ACCS-accredited school in the past five years. Preference will be given to committee members of equivalent or greater enrollment than the school being evaluated. Committee members may not be drawn from personnel attached to the school undergoing the accreditation, nor from anyone who served the school as a pre-accreditation consultant.
3. All accreditation committee members are required to have read the most current version of the ACCS Accreditation Handbook which will be forwarded to them at least two months prior to the scheduled school visit.
4. The accreditation committee chair will be assigned the responsibility of overseeing the inexperienced committee members by helping instruct them in what to look for.
5. The accreditation committee is authorized to request additional information from the applying school if that information is essential to the accreditation process. No individual accreditation committee member is authorized to request information on his own; only the accreditation committee may request

such information through the committee chair. The committee chair is appointed by the director of accreditation and will typically be the person on the committee with the most experience with ACCS accreditations.

6. The accreditation committee may call on the expertise of qualified persons who are not assigned to the committee to assist them on specific questions relating to the school accreditation if needed. Such persons will be listed in the report and the specific area(s) in which they provided assistance.
7. Accreditation committee members may not contact a school they visited for purposes of paid consultant work for one year following the date of the site visit.
8. Upon completion of the committee's visit:
 - a. Before leaving the school, the accreditation chair (and if possible all committee members) will meet with the head of school to verbally communicate general impressions that will be included in the written report that should be received within four weeks following the visit.
 - b. Draft written report. The accreditation committee will complete a written report within three weeks and send it to the director of accreditation for review. Any comments, either commendations or discrepancies, must be documented. The committee must substantiate, by example or illustration, all comments included in the report.
 - i. The director of accreditation will review the written report for compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation.
 - ii. Within one month of the site visit, the director of accreditation will send the written report to the school. The school may submit a written response within 30 days that will be attached to the report.
 - iii. The director of accreditation will send a copy of the report and the school's written response (if one is sent by the school) to the ACCS President. The director of accreditation will make a recommendation on accreditation, in the form of a cover letter, to the ACCS President.
 - c. The ACCS Director of Accreditation will make the recommendation to the ACCS President. The ACCS President will make a determination on the recommendation. The following guidelines will govern the process of accreditation/accreditation renewal upon completion of the accreditation/accreditation renewal visit.
 - d. The director of accreditation will report the board's determination to the school along with any germane comments.

C. General Philosophy.

1. Notwithstanding all the previously listed items that must be complied with, it is important to realize that not all circumstances and situations can be adequately addressed in specifics in this accreditation policy. Scripture doesn't teach, and life is not best lived, by a simple set of check-boxes. Wisdom is always the God-given key.
2. It has always been the intent of ACCS to accredit schools in the most meaningful way.
3. It is for this reason that schools seeking accreditation must realize and permit the ACCS accreditors to delve into any matters that seem relevant to them that might not have been specifically listed above. Furthermore, it must be understood that a school seeking accreditation with ACCS may be turned down even though it has met all the criteria at a "technical" level. The failure would be because they did not meet the essence of what is intended by the specific written guidelines. Such a decision would automatically be appealed to the entire ACCS Accreditation Committee, by the director of accreditation, the president, and the affected school.

D. Accreditation Fees and Expenses. The fee for the initial accreditation is \$4,000, \$2,000 of which is required with submission of the application for accreditation, and is non-refundable. The second half (\$2,000) is due on completion of the accreditation. The fee for school accreditation is separate from the expenses for travel, room, and board for the accreditation committee on-site visit.

E. Denial and Termination. If the school is found to no longer be in compliance with a qualification or criteria required for candidacy or accredited status, ACCS may find it necessary to terminate a school's recognition as "ACCS accredited." If such action is under consideration, the director of accreditation will notify the head of school that a recommendation for termination has been made to the ACCS President. The school will have the opportunity to provide documentation relative to the matter. The president will make his recommendation to the ACCS Board of Directors, who will vote on the recommendation. Once a decision to terminate a school's accredited status is made, the school must no longer promote itself as ACCS accredited.

F. Appeals Process.

1. There will be no change in the current accreditation status of a school pending disposition of an appeal.
2. The appealing school has the right to a hearing before the appeal body, either the ACCS Board of Directors (or committee authorized to hear the schools appeal).
3. The ACCS Board of Directors is the final arbiter in assigning ACCS-accredited status to ACCS-member schools. If a school is being recommended for anything other than accredited status, they may appeal the report and recommendation to the ACCS Board of Directors. The school will have 30 days to make their appeal in writing and provide sufficient documentation to substantiate their appeal. This appeal will be forwarded from the ACCS director of accreditation, to the ACCS President and to the ACCS board.
4. The ACCS Director of Accreditation will review and forward the appeal and supporting materials to the ACCS President, who will forward them to the board of directors, with his recommendation.

5. The ACCS Board of Directors shall review the appeal and supporting documentation and make a determination on the appeal at their next quarterly meeting.
6. The ACCS Director of Accreditation shall respond in writing on behalf of the board of directors to the head of the appealing school with the board's final determination. A copy of the final disposition shall be sent (as required) to the applicable accreditation oversight organization(s) of which ACCS is a member along with a copy of the appeal and the school's supporting documentation.
7. Any expenses that may arise as a result of the appeal will be borne by the appealing school.
8. Appeals will not be permitted to schools that fail to undergo a renewal visit at the end of their probation period.

G. Accreditation Renewal. All of the requirements in Sections 1 and 2 apply for accreditation renewal except as modified by the amplifying guidelines below:

1. Reapplication. Schools holding accredited status **must** re-apply within two years following their initial accreditation to maintain this status. Schools may receive renewal accreditation for a period of two or five years, based on the evaluation of the school by the assigned committee and the decision of the ACCS Board of Directors. At the end of this time, they must re-apply for renewal accreditation again in order to maintain their accredited status. (See section Section H.3, Probationary Status below for information on probation.)
2. Committee size. On-site visits for accreditation renewal following a successful accreditation will consist of at least three members for small schools (one section at each grade level) and more for large schools (more than one section at some grade levels). For accreditation renewal visits, it is preferable, if possible, to select committee members who have participated in the initial on-site visit.
3. Documentation. At least six months prior to an accreditation renewal on-site visit, an accredited school must submit an application for school accreditation renewal. Self-study documentation, in the same format as its original self-study, will be required shortly thereafter, following the guidelines in Appendix F for the Standards (Section 2).
4. Fees. For accreditation renewals, the fee is \$4,000, half (\$2,000) to be paid with the renewal application, and the remainder to be paid following the visit. Once paid, fees are **non-refundable**. The fee for school accreditation renewal is separate from the expenses for transportation, room and board, for the accreditation committee on-site visit, which are to be borne by the applying school.
5. Process. All of the other timelines and procedures listed above in Section 3 (*Accreditation Procedures*) relating to the initial accreditation process will also apply to accreditation renewal.
6. Extensions/probation. If an accredited school is unable to undergo a scheduled renewal visit within a reasonable time frame (no more than a couple of months of its scheduled due date) because of issues at the school, it must notify ACCS in writing and the school will be placed on probation. Possible reasons that might cause an accredited school to delay its accreditation and therefore be placed on probation

may include, but are not limited to, the recent loss of the school's head administrator, or the un-replaced loss of an instructor (e.g., the school's Latin teacher). The inability of ACCS to provide a timely visit for any reason will not be held against the school.

7. **Time Limit.** Schools have one additional year to have an on-site accreditation visit. If at the end of the probation period, the school does not undergo an on-site accreditation visit, its accredited status will be dropped (the school's status will be "unaccredited") with no appeal permitted. If the school on probation does have the on-site visit as scheduled at the end of its probationary period, it may have access to an appeal (see Section 3, F. for information on appeals). Subsequent application for accreditation (once the school returns to "unaccredited" status, either following the failure of the school to undergo an on-site visit or "unaccredited" status assigned by the ACCS process) will be considered an initial event. The next step for the school is re-application. At this time, the school's application will start over, returning to an initial accreditation, except that the school's application must be accompanied with a letter documenting the correction of all outstanding discrepancies from the last conducted on-site visit.
8. **Correction of Discrepancies.** Schools placed on Probation Status as a result of an on-site renewal visit, but with discrepancies that may be corrected without a subsequent on-site visit (e.g., failure of an administrative requirement), may have their status upgraded to "accredited" by the ACCS Director of Accreditation provided the school adequately documents in writing that the discrepancies have been corrected. This upgrading will only be permitted if it is assigned as a part of the school's most recent accreditation renewal report approved by the ACCS Board of Directors. Such upgrades are permissible at any time within the two-year window. The correction of discrepancies that require an on-site visit may be done without a full self-study, only requiring documents directly relevant to the discrepancy. Accreditation committees of two are appropriate for such visits.
9. **Accreditation Renewal Status.** As with accreditation, the ACCS Board will ultimately determine the accreditation renewal status of a school based on the recommendation of the ACCS Accreditation Committee. The accreditation committee will consider the report from the assigned accreditation renewal visit committee and any documentation submitted by the school in response to the committee's report.

H. Accreditation Categories and Determination.

After a school has gone through the accreditation visit, it will be assigned an accreditation status. The three categories of accredited status are listed and explained below.

1. **Full Accredited Status** is granted to those schools which meet both the initial conditions for eligibility and the criteria for accreditation as determined by the ACCS Board of Directors.
2. **Provisionally Accredited Status (Initial Accreditation Only)** is an accredited status granted to those schools that have completed their initial self-study and on-site visit but have yet to graduate their first senior class or have discrepancies that must be corrected before they can be granted Accredited Status. Schools assigned Provisionally Accredited Status may be granted up to two years (depending upon the

nature and difficulty of the discrepancy) to correct all reported discrepancies before their next on-site visit.

- I. Probationary Status. (Renewal Accreditation only)** Schools that had been successfully accredited in the past, but on a subsequent accreditation renewal have failed to meet the ACCS accreditation standards, will be placed on probationary status for no more than two years and be provided a specific list of discrepancies. Sometimes the school may be required to correct discrepancies within six months or a year. If after the two-year probationary period the school still fails to meet each of the ACCS accreditation guidelines, the school may have its accreditation status removed by ACCS. Schools that have made clear progress toward correcting all discrepancies may be continued on probation for another two years. Schools that have accreditation removed may reapply for accreditation when they can substantially document that they have corrected all of the outstanding discrepancies. The subsequent accreditation process will be considered as though it was a first-time accreditation which would include all fees, expenses, and documentation. The above notwithstanding, a school placed on Probationary Status may appeal to the ACCS Director of Accreditation at any time with proof that the issues which resulted in Probationary Status have been corrected.
- J. Annual Review for ACCS-Accredited Schools** Each ACCS-accredited school must answer these questions on an annual basis during membership renewal:

Review of Accreditation Standards: Has the school designated a member of the school board, staff, or faculty to review the ACCS accreditation standards (Section 2, Standards) within the past year and can that person affirm that the school still conforms to the minimal requirements for ACCS accreditation?

Changes to Key Documents:

1. **Bylaw Review:** Has the school made significant changes to its bylaws since the last accreditation visit? If so, please describe those changes.
2. **Policy Manual Review:** Has the school made significant changes to its policy manual since the last visit? If so, please describe those changes.
3. **Curriculum Guide Review:** Has the school made significant changes to its curriculum guide(s) since the last visit? If so, please describe those changes.
4. **Teacher Certification:** As an ACCS-accredited school, you are required to participate in an ACCS teacher certification program. Is the school actively pursuing teacher certification for all full-time (and affected part-time) teachers?

Other Potential Changes: Have any of the following occurred during the covered time period?

5. Has there been a change in the head of school?
6. Has the school added a grade level to an existing division (i.e., adding grade 8 when grades K–7 are already accredited)?
7. Has the school added online, credit recovery courses?

8. Any additional information related to the answers above:

Reminder–Substantive Change: Under certain conditions, ACCS-accredited schools are required to send a report within 60 days of any of the following changes in the school. Failure to notify ACCS as required of a substantive change is grounds for the association to issue a letter asking the school to show cause as to why the school’s status should not be withheld, with a time stated, to a candidate or accredited school. Please see the “Substantive Change” section in the Accreditation Handbook for more information.

New section

K. Substantive Change in ACCS-Accredited Schools

Under certain conditions, ACCS-accredited schools are required to send a report within 60 days of any of the following changes in the school. Failure to notify ACCS as required of a substantive change is grounds for the association to issue a letter asking the school to show cause as to why the school’s status should not be withheld, with a time stated, to a candidate or accredited school.

If a substantive change occurs in an accredited school, the continuation of the school’s accredited status, or the inclusion of the substantive change in the institution’s previous grant of accreditation, shall require notice to the Director of Accreditation regarding the proposed change and may require, at the discretion of the ACCS:

Review of the notice and supporting documents by the Director of Accreditation. This may require:

- A request for additional documentation, at the discretion of the Director of Accreditation. For example, financial issues could require the completion of a financial integrity report.
- A one- or two-day visit by a one- or two-member team at the discretion of the Director of Accreditation.
- Recommendation from the Director of Accreditation to the president.
- Subsequent approval by the president.

These are the conditions that constitute a “substantive change” in an accredited school as well as the processes for communicating a substantive change to the director of accreditation.

The following items require the school to inform the director of accreditation:

1. Change in the school’s legal name or EIN (Employer Identification Number).
2. Change in ownership or control
3. Change in legal status (e.g., from nonprofit to for-profit, bankruptcy, church-sponsored to independent, etc.) or form of control of the institution
4. Change in the school’s established mission
5. A material change in the school’s financial position that threatens the school’s ability to remain a going concern or otherwise threatens the school’s ability to effectively support its operations
6. Change of location or adding a location that is under the accreditation status

7. The merger of two schools, whether only one or both are currently accredited
8. Change in grade level configuration. Including the addition of a new school division that is not yet accredited (e.g., high school) or a grade that opens up a new division (e.g. grade 9)
9. Addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, in terms of either the content or method of delivery. This includes a change in the type of school or in the curricular identity of the school (e.g., International Baccalaureate, Classical, ACE, etc.) or a change or significant addition(s) to program delivery (e.g., percentage of online courses)
10. Addition of degree or diploma-granting program
11. Notification of adverse action taken or threatened by a state or other accrediting agency
12. Any change that impacts the meeting of a condition of eligibility, an accreditation standard, or a critical indicator or other change representing a significant departure in circumstances from those that were present at the time of the most recent ACCS accreditation renewal visit.

Substantive change reports should include a brief narrative about the nature of the change, the decision-making process leading to the change, including reference to the strategic plan, any impact on the standards or critical indicators, and the anticipated benefits of the change.

Following a document review and/or site visit, the director of accreditation will make a recommendation to the president. Recommendations will state:

1. Whether the changes are approved or not approved.
2. Whether the school will maintain its regular timeline for accreditation renewal
3. Whether components of accreditation renewal must be received earlier, or if the entire renewal schedule must be changed.

The school will be notified of the specific grounds for any association's adverse action, the specific standard(s) for which there has not been compliance, the nature of the action, and the right of the school to appeal if permitted by, and in accordance with, the appeal procedures in the Accreditation Handbook.

| SCHOOLS SEEKING INITIAL ACCREDITATION | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| INITIAL ACCREDITATION RESULTS | IMPLICATIONS | CONSEQUENCE/ASSIGNMENT |
| Major Discrepancy ¹ | Will seriously impair the quality of education. | Failure or Provisional Accreditation If Provisional, the school must correct all identified discrepancies within the specified time frame; will likely require another site visit. Candidate for Accreditation status will be retained by a school that has failed accreditation as a result of excessive discrepancies as determined by the ACCS Board. This status will last for up to two years to correct all discrepancies and reschedule another site visit. |
| Minor Discrepancies ² | Will mildly impair the quality of education. | Provisional Accreditation Must correct all identified discrepancies within specified time frame; may possibly require another site visit |
| No Discrepancies | None | Assigned accredited status for two years at which time a renewal visit is required of all initially accredited schools |
| Recommendations ³ | May help the school's long-term performance. | None |

¹ **Major Discrepancy.** A major discrepancy is defined as the failure of a school to meet one of the criteria listed in Section E, Criteria for Accreditation.

² **Minor Discrepancy.** A minor discrepancy is defined as the school not adequately meeting one of the criteria listed in Section E, Criteria for Accreditation. Should the Accreditation Visit Committee or the ACCS Accreditation Committee determine that the accumulation of minor discrepancies is so numerous that their aggregate seriously impairs the quality of education, the sum total may be designated as a major discrepancy.

³ **Recommendations.** These are suggested changes or improvements that all committee members agree on and that are based on experience and directly related to the ACCS Criteria for Accreditation. Individual committee members may make additional suggestions, but they will not be included as a part of the accreditation report.

| SCHOOLS SEEKING RENEWAL ACCREDITATION | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------|---|
| RENEWAL RESULTS | IMPLICATIONS | CURRENT SCHOOL STATUS | CONSEQUENCE/ASSIGNMENT |
| Major Discrepancy ¹ | Will seriously impair the quality of education. | Provisional Status | Convert to “Probationary” status. Must correct all identified discrepancies within specified time frame; may possibly require another site visit OR Fail accreditation. If failed, must restart accreditation process. |
| | | Accredited Status | “Probationary” Status. Must correct all discrepancies within specified time frame; will likely require another site visit. |
| | | Probationary Status | Probationary Status. Must correct all identified discrepancies within specified time frame; may possibly require another site visit OR Fail accreditation; if failed, must restart accreditation process |
| Minor Discrepancies ² | Will mildly impair the quality of education. | Provisional Status | Convert to “Probationary” status. Must correct all identified discrepancies within specified time frame. |
| | | Probationary Status | Probationary Status. Must correct all identified discrepancies within specified time frame; may possibly require another site visit OR Fail accreditation; if failed, must restart accreditation process. |
| No Discrepancies | None | Accredited Status | May be assigned up to five years before the next visit. |
| Recommendations ³ | May help the school’s long-term performance. | All categories | Although no action is long term performance mandated, a written comment is required for each recommendation prior to the next accreditation visit |

¹ Definitions for these terms are found under the chart on page 41.

L. Review and Change Procedures.

1. Review. An ACCS Accreditation Committee, appointed by the president, will periodically review the ACCS accreditation standards. The objective of this review will be to make any recommendations to the ACCS Board that will improve the ACCS accreditation process and procedures. The appointed committee may seek additional input from others not assigned, including, but not limited to, ACCS member schools that have been through the ACCS accreditation process.
2. Changes. Proposed changes to the ACCS accreditation standards may come from any source within ACCS, including the director of accreditation. Proposed changes should be submitted to the ACCS Director of Accreditation and to the president, for consideration before being passed along to the ACCS Board for final determination. Administrative changes (spelling, punctuation, formatting) may be made by the director of accreditation without resorting to the above process so long as such emendations do not alter the intent of the current process or procedures.

The proposed changes shall include as a minimum the following:

- a. Proposed wording.
- b. Reason(s) why the change is required and how it will improve either the process or procedures, as well as the sound data and research that supports this change.
- c. The location in the accreditation standards of where the change is to be inserted.
- d. Changes often come as the result of accreditation visits. The ACCS Director of Accreditation will seek feedback on accreditation visits from both the accreditation committee and the visited head of school. This information will be made available to the appointed review committee.

Changes to the ACCS accreditation standards will be made as a result of a majority vote of the board during a scheduled board meeting where the results are then recorded in minutes which are subsequently approved.

APPENDIX A: ACCS ACCREDITATION ENDORSEMENTS

Our endorsement program allows for a variety of types of accreditation available through the ACCS.

A. Currently approved and available:

1. Standard Accreditation (with a Diploma Authorization): Our standard form of accreditation, this form assumes a K–12 academic program spanning a standard school year, day, and hourly schedule comparable with a conventional school in your state. Schools that achieve this level of accreditation, at the school's option, may issue authorized diplomas with this statement: "Diploma authorized by the Association of Classical & Christian Schools".
2. Shared-Instruction (formerly "Conservatory") Endorsement (accredited as "shared-instruction"): This form of accreditation is granted to schools that operate with non-traditional schedules or hours to share responsibility for education more heavily with parents. These schools, if they offer a full K–12 program, may grant ACCS authorized high-school diplomas. Schools have the option to issue authorized diplomas with this statement: "Diploma authorized by the Association of Classical & Christian Schools".

B. Currently awaiting development (we are seeking trial-schools and standard development):

1. Limited Grade-Level Endorsement (accredited as "limited level program"): This endorsement allows schools to become ACCS accredited without a full K–12 program. Schools with a "limited program" accreditation may not offer high-school diplomas or certificates (ACCS endorsed, or otherwise). Examples include K–6 or K–8 programs in markets where other classical Christian options complete the K–12 experience. *Schools that serve grades 7–12 do not qualify for this endorsement*, nor do schools that are officially in the process of building up to K–12.
2. Limited Student-service Endorsement: This is given to schools that serve a specific sub-population of students, for example, learning disabled, physically disabled, missionary kids, etc. This category does not apply to schools with selective application policies that are within the spectrum of "normal."

C. Accreditation types not available from the ACCS

1. Daycare Certification: ACCS does not certify the daycare operations of member schools undergoing ACCS accreditation.
2. Regional Reciprocity or Direct State Recognition: Except where required by law (e.g., Tennessee), we do not offer reciprocity directly with the state, federal, or regional accreditation authorities. We do, however, accept private accreditation recognition from states that offer this service under terms that protect the independence of our schools. The ACCS school accreditation program is currently recognized by Texas, Oklahoma, Virginia, and Georgia through their private councils.

Initial accreditation for these endorsements may involve one or two visits, depending on the school's readiness. All schools undergoing accreditation for the first time may earn, at most, provisional or accredited status, for a maximum of two years, at which time another accreditation application, self-study, and site visit are required. This helps to ensure that new schools are carefully brought into our system, and that some of the requirements,

like teacher certification, are functioning. Well-prepared schools may earn provisional accredited status after the first visit while some schools may require a second visit to achieve provisional status.

APPENDIX B: FINANCIAL INTEGRITY REQUIREMENTS

In having an independent accountant or bookkeeper respond to the questions in this document, the school will be fulfilling the requirement of Section 2, B.4 of the ACCS Accreditation Program. ACCS neither requires nor desires an audit.

These requirements have two purposes: first and foremost, to assist schools in their stewardship; and second, to avoid association with financial mismanagement. These requirements serve as guides to building financial integrity into a school's operations. Since schools accredited by ACCS are held up as examples for other schools to emulate, it is important that a school seeking ACCS accreditation have sound financial policies established and in practice.

For ACCS accreditation, a member school must have an independent financial agent/agency review and evaluate the school in each of the following six areas. **A written letter from the financial institution must be included in the school's documentation package addressing each item below and briefly describing the school's implementation of each of these requirements.**

- I. Internal Controls
- II. Planning
- III. Financial Policies
- IV. Accounting Records
- V. Communication
- VI. Oversight

The following paragraphs amplify the six requirements listed above, and provide specific questions that must be addressed in the letter from the independent financial institution.

I. An accredited school must adhere to effective internal controls.

Internal controls govern the way things are done at a school, things pertaining to the school's resources. They are, therefore, embodied in policies and procedures, which in turn have been designed to safeguard assets by reducing the opportunities for misappropriation or fraud. ACCS requires accredited schools to both have and adhere to effective internal controls. Furthermore, these internal controls must be embodied in written policies and procedural guidelines.

- A. Does the school have clearly defined, written policies/procedural guidelines specifically on internal controls?
- B. Do these written policies/procedural guidelines, if properly followed, reduce the opportunities for misappropriation? If not, what needs to be changed to make them so?

II. An accredited school must plan.

A budget expresses in writing the anticipated costs of operating and how those costs will be met. The budgeting process requires schools to think ahead, *i.e.*, plan. This process is based on the principle of counting the cost. It repudiates and helps prevent the sin of being anxious about tomorrow. ACCS requires schools seeking accreditation to develop written budgets for the upcoming year and encourages them to plan even further ahead, in all instances committing their way to God.

- A. Does the school have a written and board-approved budget for the current year?
- B. Does the budget show an operating deficit at the end of the fiscal year?
- C. Does the school demonstrate in its operations that it is conforming to its budget on a monthly basis?

III. An accredited school must adhere to sound financial policies.

Financial policies overlap with internal controls, but are broader in scope. They embody the principles of wise financial conduct. They promote efficiency, economy, and effectiveness. They protect integrity. ACCS requires schools seeking accreditation to both have and adhere to sound, written financial policies.

- A. Does the school have board-approved written financial policies?
- B. Do these policies provide guidance to the board, administrator, and staff in how finances are to be managed by the school? If not, what is needed to correct any deficiencies?

IV. An accredited school must maintain appropriate accounting records.

Accounting records are appropriate when they are suitable, contemporaneous, and accurate: suitable because they conform to the common principles of accounting, contemporaneous because they are kept up to date, and accurate because their contents are correctly recorded. They are the historical record of the school's financial dealings and provide experience to the planning process. ACCS requires schools seeking accreditation to maintain suitable, contemporaneous, and accurate accounting records.

- A. Does the school have an accountant?
- B. Is the accountant familiar with common principles of accounting?
- C. Are the accounting records up to date?
- D. Do the contents appear to be correctly recorded?
- E. Does the school maintain past files of their accounting records? How far back?

V. An accredited school must communicate aptly in financial matters.

Schools have financial dealings with customers, suppliers, benefactors, regulatory bodies and staff, among others. Needful information is sometimes historical, as in a report, and sometimes prospective, as in a tuition or salary agreement. Aptness means suited to the purpose. The ultimate purpose being the honoring of the Lord Jesus Christ, communication must be above reproach. It must seek to avoid misunderstanding and

misconceptions. ACCS requires schools seeking accreditation to publish, report, or otherwise disseminate information aptly.

- A. Does the school make monthly or quarterly financial reports to the school board?
- B. Does the school make an annual financial report to the school's constituency?
- C. Are these reports formatted in such a way as to make them understandable and usable?

VI. An accredited school must be overseen financially.

One of the primary safeguards of any enterprise is active oversight by those ultimately responsible. Without attentive involvement, accountability suffers. Internal controls may be sidestepped. Planning may be foregone. Sound financial policies may go unheeded. ACCS requires schools seeking accreditation to be overseen financially by their governing bodies.

- A. Does the school's bylaws or policy manual have provision for the school board to oversee the school's financial operations?
- B. Do these guidelines provide adequate checks to ensure the board that the school is complying with all of the required financial guidelines and internal controls? If not, what needs to be changed to make them so?

Evaluation

In approving a school for accreditation, ACCS will evaluate the member school's performance in the above six areas, giving appropriate weight to the evaluation letter submitted by the independent financial agency. It will also give consideration to the school's past financial dealings and current financial state.

Deficiencies

Deficiencies will be deemed either terminal or curable. **Terminal deficiencies will bar accreditation by ACCS.** Curable deficiencies will result in a probationary accreditation by ACCS. The terms of the probationary period will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Probation is intended to allow the benefits of accreditation while a school is making demonstrable progress towards meeting the financial integrity requirements, pursuant to its plan of corrective action.

Plans of corrective action

Developing a plan of corrective action is the responsibility of the applicant school, as is the implementation of the plan. Each plan must outline the specific steps that will be taken to correct deficiencies, together with a proposed timeline.

APPENDIX C: ACCREDITATION TIME LINE

Note: The days indicated below on the time line may be reduced, but should not be extended without prior mutual concurrence between ACCS and the school.

Day

0 School submits accreditation/renewal application (fees non-refundable)

7 Accreditation/renewal application received at ACCS

8 Application reviewed and approved, school notified of their approval as a Candidate for Accreditation

Note: The school has up to one year from the date of notification to submit their documentation package to ACCS for preliminary review (failure to make the one-year deadline will terminate the school's approval as a Candidate, and the process must be re-initiated)

X School's documentation package received at ACCS

X+7 The ACCS Director of Accreditation reviews the documentation package for completeness. Additions/corrections are requested from the applying school. If there are no corrections, the school is directed to send copies of the package to the assigned accreditation committee members. (Note: There may be some additional short delay at this point if ACCS determines that the package is incomplete and additional items are required. However, all required items must be submitted no later than one year from the date of the letter of notification of being approved as a Candidate for Accreditation. For this reason, it would behoove a school to submit its documentation package to ACCS for review as soon as possible.)

X+37 (Note: This approximates 30 days after the committee members have received their copy of the documentation package.) The accreditation committee completes its review and makes their recommendation to the ACCS Director of Accreditation as to whether a visit is warranted or not, and any reasons for a negative recommendation. If the recommendation is affirmative, the visit date is confirmed with the school and the accreditation committee.

X+45 Committee members purchase their own airline tickets, and send a copy of the receipt to ACCS for reimbursement. ACCS will consolidate all expenses for the visit and bill the school separately after the visit.

The school must then:

- Arrange for three single hotel rooms for the committee during the visit
- Arrange for box lunches for committee members for the days they are at the school
- Coordinate with the ACCS Director of Accreditation for the final visit schedule (see Visit Committee Handbook)

- X+90 The accreditation committee arrives
- X+91 The on-site visit begins
- X+92 The on-site visit completes. The committee determines its recommendation for the ACCS Accreditation Committee, and develops its basic comments for the final report.
- X+93 The committee reports its recommendation on accreditation to the school's administrator, and provides any supporting comments. It must be noted that the wording of the final report may be more comprehensive than the initial comments made to the school administrator.
- X+114 The committee completes its written report and sends it to the director of accreditation for review.
- X+123 A copy of the written report is sent to the school. The school may submit to ACCS a written response within 30 days that will be attached to the report.
- X+153 The director of accreditation sends a copy of the report (and the school's written response, if submitted) to the ACCS President.
- X+243 The ACCS President will review the recommendation from the director of accreditation, the written report from the visit committee, and any written response from the school, and make the final determination on accreditation within 30 days of the receipt of the draft accreditation report.
- X+244 The director of accreditation will report the president's decision to the school and any germane comments.

APPENDIX D: ADDITIONAL STANDARDS FOR REGIONAL ACCREDITING ORGANIZATIONS

These are additional standards that schools in these states must address, in addition to ACCS standards.

1. GEORGIA SCHOOL ACCREDITATION ADDENDUM (GAPSAC)

ACCS Board Approval: January 23, 2015

Guidelines: The following criteria are to be used as minimum acceptable requirements to approve an ACCS school for accreditation under this Georgia Addendum in addition to the requirements of Policy 5.3.I, the ACCS Accreditation Policy (i.e., ACCS Accreditation Handbook).

When Georgia schools apply for ACCS accreditation, they must ensure the following GAPSAC requirements are met, and these will be verified in the self-study and by the ACCS visit committee during the on-site visit.

GAPSAC Requirements and References (in addition to the ACCS Accreditation Standards):

- A. Under paragraph B. j. Library/Media Center: “In clear realization of the increasing need of students to have computer skills in acquiring information, the school should implement and follow a plan to provide computers sufficient in number to give students instruction in accessing the Internet.” (GAPSAC standards, p. 23, item j.6)
- B. Under paragraph B. j. Library/Media Center: “Internet use and access should be governed by the school in accord with the school’s philosophy and objectives.” (GAPSAC standards, p. 23, item j.7)
- C. Under paragraph B. j. Library/Media Center: “Each school shall spend a minimum of \$30 per student or \$500 per year on library/media center materials (whichever is less). (GAPSAC standards, p. 24, item j.8)
- D. Under paragraph B. o.: Required Standardized Testing: “Reports of this testing shall be included in the annual report to the accrediting organization to which the school belongs.” (GAPSAC standards, p. 26, item o.3)
- E. Each school shall comply with minimum kindergarten age policy.

2. TENNESSEE SCHOOL ACCREDITATION ADDENDUM

ACCS Board Approval: January 25, 2014

Guidelines: The following criteria are to be used as minimum acceptable requirements to approve an ACCS school for accreditation under this Tennessee Addendum in addition to the requirements of Policy 5.3.1, the ACCS Accreditation Policy (i.e., ACCS Accreditation Handbook).

- A. When schools apply for ACCS accreditation, they must affirm that they are not in violation of any state laws. This statement will include the following:
1. Each school shall have a minimum of five days for in-service education per school year.
 2. Each school shall maintain an operating schedule that includes the minimum number of instructional days and hours required of public schools.
 3. Each school which provides services to students certified as eligible students with disabilities shall meet all standards of the State Board of Education.
 4. Each school shall develop and implement a written policy on promotion and retention. The written policy shall be communicated to students and parents.
 5. Each principal or headmaster shall comply with the requirements regarding reporting the names, ages, and addresses of all pupils in attendance to the superintendent of the public school system in which the student resides.
 6. Each principal or headmaster shall comply with the requirement that each child enrolled in school be vaccinated against disease.
 7. The maximum enrollments for an individual class shall be specified, shall not be subject to waiver, and shall not exceed the following:
 - a. Kindergarten through grade 3: 25 students
 - b. Grade 4: 28 students
 - c. Grades 5 through 6: 30 students
 - d. Grades 7 through 12: 35 students
 8. At least once every school year, each school shall give a nationally standardized achievement test covering the areas of reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies to each pupil in third through twelfth grade.
 9. Each school shall comply with minimum kindergarten age policy.
 10. Schools must teach the following courses for the indicated credits:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| a. Economics/Government | 1.0 |
| b. Wellness | 1.0 |
| c. Physical Education | 0.5 |
| d. Personal Finance | 0.5 |

- ii. As instructional leaders, school principals must meet the same requirements for certification as required for teachers in the ACCS teacher certification program. Written work will be submitted to the ACCS Director of Accreditation for review

3. TEXAS STATE SCHOOL ACCREDITATION ADDENDUM (TEPSAC)

ACCS Board Approval: March 11, 2014

Guidelines: The following criteria are to be used as the minimum acceptable requirements to approve an ACCS school for accreditation in the state of Texas in addition to the requirements of Policy 5.3.1, the ACCS Accreditation Policy (i.e., ACCS Accreditation Handbook).

- A. School Involvement. The school seeking accredited status must document that the entire school participated in preparation for the accreditation visit. It is recognized that not everyone will participate to the same degree, but everyone on the school staff must participate.
- B. Make-up of an Accreditation Committee. All assigned accreditation committee members must either be a member of the ACCS Board of Directors, the ACCS Director of Accreditation, the head of school of an ACCS-accredited school, or a head of school from a prospective candidate school for ACCS accreditation. The assigned committee will consist of at least two experienced members and at least one inexperienced member who will be using the visit as a training experience. In addition, at least one party must be a non-policy making member.
- C. Training of Accreditation Committee Members.
 - 1. All accreditation committee members are required to have read the most current version of the ACCS Accreditation Procedures which will be forwarded to them at least two months prior to the scheduled school visit.
 - 2. One of the experienced team members will be assigned responsibility of overseeing the inexperienced committee member and helping instruct him in what to look for.
- D. Appeals Process.
 - 1. There will be no change in the current accreditation status of a school pending disposition of an appeal.
 - 2. The appealing school has the right to a hearing before the appeal body, either the ACCS Board of Directors, or an Executive Committee of the Board assigned for that purpose.
 - 3. The ACCS Board of Directors is the final arbiter in assigning ACCS-accredited status to ACCS member schools. If a school is being recommended for anything other than accredited status, they may appeal the report and recommendation from the accreditation committee to the ACCS Board of Directors. The school will have 30 days to make their appeal in writing and provide sufficient documentation to substantiate their appeal. This appeal will be forwarded to the ACCS Board via the president.
 - 4. The ACCS Director of Accreditation will review and forward the appeal and supporting materials to the ACCS President, with his recommendation.
 - 5. The ACCS Board of Directors shall review the appeal and supporting documentation and make a determination on the appeal.

The ACCS Director of Accreditation shall respond in writing on behalf of the board of directors to the head of the appealing school with the board's final determination. A copy of the final disposition shall be sent to TEPSAC along with a copy of the appeal and the school's supporting documentation.

6. Major Discrepancy. A major discrepancy is defined as the failure of a school to sufficiently meet one or more of the criteria listed in Section 2 Standards.
7. Participation in TEPSAC. ACCS will actively participate in the governance of TEPSAC, and may do so through designation of a proxy to act on its behalf. The designated proxy does not have the authority to commit either the resources of ACCS or to make any policy binding ACCS and its association members.

4. VIRGINIA STATE SCHOOL ACCREDITATION ADDENDUM (VCPE)

ACCS Board Approval: November 12, 2018

Guidelines: The following criteria are to be used as the minimum acceptable requirements to approve an ACCS school for accreditation in the commonwealth of Virginia in addition to the requirements of Policy 5.3.1, the ACCS Accreditation Policy (i.e., ACCS Accreditation Handbook).

A. Schools must define the specific student populations served by the school such as early childhood, pre-school, pre-kindergarten, junior kindergarten, elementary, secondary, post-secondary, special education (disabilities served), or before and after school care.

(Note: This is not required given current guidelines. The addition of accreditation endorsements could change this.)

B. School will give descriptions of and eligibility for services provided by the school as applicable, including but not limited to learning resources, health services, food services and transportation.

GUIDANCE: Team leader or designee should explain how the association reviewed items 1, 2, and 3 and how long the school has existed in Virginia.

C. Schools will undergo periodic, systematic, and professional independent audit or financial review occurring within the accreditation review period.

GUIDANCE: The association representative should explain how the association assures compliance with state and federal legal requirements. The team leader or designee should verify how this process occurs at the school level. The association representative should provide a copy of *Virginia Law and Private Schools: A Guide to Opening and Operating a Private School in Virginia* to the association prior to the visit to ensure that this important document reaches the school.

D. Schools must conform with appropriate state and federal legal requirements including but not limited to the information provided in the most recent edition of *Virginia Law and Private Schools: A Guide to Opening and Operating a Private School in Virginia*.

GUIDANCE: The team leader or designee must verify compliance of standards relative to items v through xi as defined by the association.

E. Schools must provide the maintenance and disposition of student and staff records, encompassing:

1. Policy on information included in records;
2. Storage of records;
3. Handling records if school closes. The school must have a written policy which provides specific guidance on the retention of student records in the event the school should close, and must include at a minimum: the custodian organization; contact name; contact title; address; phone; and email address.

F. Schools will provide educational program administration.

1. **GUIDANCE:** Interview the team leader or designee and observe the process by which these items are reviewed. Curriculum should include content related to, but not limited to: language; literacy, mathematics, science, consideration of cognitive abilities related to academic achievement and child development; social/emotional development; creative arts; physical development, and health. For early education programs, schedules, routines, and transition practices should be age appropriate.
- G. The school calendar should adhere to compulsory attendance laws and include student and teacher scheduling.
- H. The school will provide policies on staff qualifications including but not limited to job descriptions, personnel handbook, performance evaluations, and criminal background checks. (Note: Virginia requires criminal background checks.)
- I. The school will show family and communication practices and policies including but not limited to parent involvement, services offered to students, and a parent handbook. Observe interviews with families during the visit.

GUIDANCE: Ask the team leader to provide evidence of policies and practices for communication and involvement with families. Observe interviews with families during the visit.

J. Safe School Initiatives

1. Emergency Management and Disaster Response Plans
2. Medication Administration Training
3. Assessment and Management of Concussions
4. Prevention and Mitigation of Bullying

GUIDANCE: Ask to see examples of association communication on safe school initiative and related policies at the school level. (This requirement was updated January 2017 and a grace period for implementation is allowed.)

APPENDIX E: ACCS BOARD POLICIES RELATED TO ACCS ACCREDITATION

RATIONALE FOR ACCREDITING

Dates: Approved 3/12/02

Objective: To establish the rationale for accreditation of ACCS member schools that have grades 1–10, in process to becoming grades 1–12.

Scope: This policy applies to all ACCS member schools applying to ACCS for accreditation.

Guidelines:

- A. ACCS accreditation policy only allows for the accreditation of ACCS member schools that have been in operation as a classical and Christian school for at least five years, and that have grown to the point where they have classes ranging from, as a minimum, grades 1–10, and are in process of growing to become a full 1–12 school. ACCS is committed to accrediting only schools that meet these criteria because they can demonstrate that they are committed to providing the whole spectrum of the Trivium: grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric, consistent with the developmental stages of their students, Poll-parrot, Pert, and Poetic.
- B. In addition, where multiple schools exist in the same locale, viz., a grammar school and a secondary school, with both operating under different school boards, ACCS will not accredit both schools as though they were one single school. ACCS is committed to accrediting the entire Trivium. Although multiple schools may provide all aspects of the Trivium, the separate school governments are a concern with regard to longevity of the mutual relationship, and consequently, such a relationship may be unable to commit long term to providing all stages of the Trivium. For example, if one school should choose to go a different direction, in doing so, it would remove those stages of the Trivium from the overall instruction provided by both schools. Because of the tenuous nature of such an arrangement, ACCS is not willing to accredit schools in this situation.

GOVERNMENT VOUCHER POLICY

Dates: Approved 9/20/01

Objective: To provide ACCS schools with the position that ACCS takes with regard to government vouchers.

Scope: This policy applies to all ACCS schools seeking accreditation with ACCS, regardless of their membership category.

Definitions: Government vouchers are defined as a monetary payment made to or on behalf of parents of school-age children by any agency of the civil government in the United States, whether federal, state, or local, with that money to be used for tuition or tuition assistance in a private Christian academy.

Guidelines: ACCS will not accredit nor renew the accreditation of schools that accept government vouchers.

STATEMENT ON VOUCHERS

Dates: Approved 9/20/01

Occasion: As a matter of policy, ACCS requires schools seeking accreditation with ACCS to refrain from accepting vouchers. This has caused some confusion over the reasons for this stand, and so the board offers this clarification.

Definition: For purposes of this statement, vouchers should be defined as a monetary payment made to or on behalf of parents of school-age children by any agency of the civil government in the United States, whether federal, state, or local, with that money to be used for tuition or tuition assistance in a private Christian academy.

Rationale:

The issue for ACCS is one of ultimate religious authority in our schools. It is not a concern about the proper relationship of the civil magistrate to a Christian school in an (ideal) Christian republic. Thus the question is not over the abstract question of “school and state” in an ideal setting. Rather, our concern in particular relates to the current situation we find ourselves in. Every civil government in the United States is prohibited by law from acknowledging the lordship of Jesus Christ in any way. Our schools, on the other hand, are seeking to acknowledge the authority of the Lord Jesus in every area of life.

Our concern over vouchers is that we do not want our schools funded by those who have shown themselves to be formally antagonistic to everything we are trying to do and teach. A response to this might be that Scripture allows for “plundering the Egyptians,” and that the use of vouchers is just a modern-day example of this. The difficulty with this view is that the Egyptians are not being plundered; we are. We are not a victorious people being led away from the smoldering ruin that was Egypt; we continue to live in a culture and under a government characterized by unbelief.

In our view, the acceptance of vouchers would be a significant first step in bringing our schools under the direct control of an unbelieving civil magistrate. The proverb expresses the principle well: "He who takes the king's coin becomes the king's man." If we receive money from the government, we must know that the money comes with conditions. Today, the conditions might be tolerable. But if they are not tolerable tomorrow, e.g., the school may not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, we will discover that getting out of the trap is a lot more difficult than getting in. Our unbelieving government will argue (rightly) that our receipt of their money meant that we must conform to the public policy of the civil government. They have already argued this way, and successfully. In the Bob Jones case, argued before the Supreme Court, the benefit of tax exemption meant that Bob Jones could not have a dating policy that was contrary to the policy of the federal government. And the fact that the policy at Bob Jones was an unbiblical one is beside the point. In a free country, they would have had the right to be silly. Consequently, our current legal situation is such that institutions which receive money from the government had better be prepared to receive their overall marching orders from that same government.

One reply to this might be that if the government started requiring the hiring of homosexual teachers, then the school would begin to decline the vouchers at that point. But this ignores the nature of budgetary growth. It is possible that some schools will do this. But if the budget has expanded to accommodate the new voucher money, it will be very difficult for the school to return to its original size without firing staff, closing programs, dismissing a third of the student body, etc. In other words, there will be a great deal of immediate pressure, on the ground, to capitulate.

ACCS is not approaching this question in a perfectionist fashion. We understand that children will be driven to our schools on roads paid for by this secular government. They will all have various entanglements with government money, whether it is parents on Medicare, surplus cheese in their lunch bags, or participation in parks-and-rec athletic programs. Our concern is not to have every minor problem fixed instantly; rather, it is to avoid creating a new, significant entanglement which would bring our schools under the authority of those who refuse to acknowledge our Lord.

The fact that such things could happen does not mean they necessarily would. This is quite true. But in the instances where it has happened, it has happened because the school set itself up for the problem, invited the problem. In other words, the disaster need not be universal to be significant. We would be grateful for those instances where a school escaped losing their academic freedom. Occasionally, a school will not reap what it sows. But as a general pattern, it remains true that God is not mocked. If we sow government involvement, we must not be surprised at the (now unwanted) government involvement at harvest time.

We are seeking the freedom to teach our students that the lordship of Christ is relevant in all that they do. One of the best things we can do in this regard is to set an example. The all-encompassing lordship of Christ should affect how we decide to fund our schools.

APPENDIX F: SAMPLE SUBMISSION PACKAGE

ACCS Accreditation Standards

Recommendation: Pick any one of the accreditation standards. Follow the instructions to document and explain the school's compliance with that standard. Send this documentation and explanation for this one standard to the director of accreditation for review before proceeding on to the completion of the rest of the accreditation standards.

To be granted ACCS accreditation subsequent to being approved as a Candidate for Accreditation, a school must demonstrate that it has successfully met the following Criteria for Accreditation and that it can be reasonably expected to continue to achieve such:

Standard A.1. Classical Christian Commitment. The school must demonstrate that it promotes itself as a classical Christian school, has a mission and vision statement, a statement of faith, that school programs incorporate these statements, and that it serves the cause of Christ consonant with the distinctives of ACCS.

First, schools must use documentation to “show” compliance with each standard. This is the more important of the two steps.

Documentation: (“Show”) (All must be published.)

1. Mission Statement
2. Vision Statement
3. Statement of Faith (should include a definition of marriage)

Second, schools must “tell” the reviewer how the documentation demonstrates compliance. Also, when long documents are used, tell the reviewer specifically where to look.

Explanation: (“Tell”)

1. The mission statement is published on our website and in parent-student handbooks.
2. The vision statement is published on our website and in parent-student handbooks.
3. The Statement of Faith and Philosophy demonstrates the school's commitment to a system of doctrine in concert with the ACCS Statement of Faith.
4. Notes should describe how Scripture is integrated into school programs and curriculum.

APPENDIX G: INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS: SELF-EVALUATION TOOL

Schools seeking initial ACCS school accreditation sometimes fail to demonstrate compliance with this standard: Instructional methods should evidence an understanding and application of the applicable “tools of learning.” That is, grammatical methods should be clearly applied at all levels of the grammar stage, dialectic techniques should be used throughout that level, and rhetoric practically observed in the upper grades.

These questions are designed to assist you in preparing for an ACCS school accreditation site visit. Share these questions with teachers. A school administrator should observe and analyze classroom instruction according to these statements.

The visiting committee members will be looking for these instructional methods as they observe classroom instruction. Of course, they do not expect to see every method in every lesson. This is an *illustrative* list of classroom activities that demonstrate compliance with this standard.

Grammar School

1. Are teachers using songs and choral recitations (chants, jingles, etc.) to help students memorize facts? Do teachers have students memorize and recite passages of literature, Scripture, etc.? Do teachers use “call and response” and catechisms?
2. Are students using motions and movement in the acquiring and remembering of facts/concepts? Do lessons for the youngest students appeal to as many senses as possible?
3. Does each lesson start with a review of prior material? Are there frequent reviews of facts and memorization? Do teachers use classroom transitions to review facts?
4. Does the teacher ask students what they already know about the subject, so that the teacher may start the lesson from that point (as opposed to assuming the students know nothing and teaching the same information over again)?
5. Are students encouraged to express and articulate what they are discovering/learning in their own words (show and tell, read aloud, tell stories, etc.)?
6. Do students have opportunity to explore, find, collect, and identify in the environment around them?
7. Are teachers teaching to an objective that is clear to students and evident to an observer?
8. During the lesson, do teachers assess student understanding in order to gauge whether students comprehend the material?

Logic School

The following types of activities should be observed in all courses, i.e., history, literature, math, and science, not only in the logic class.

1. Do units or lessons begin with questions that frame the concept, idea, or skill under consideration?

2. Do teachers engage students so that students are active participants in the lesson and learning?
3. Do teachers ask questions that require students to go beyond yes or no answers, or short, rote responses?
Are teachers asking “why” a lot?
4. Do teachers engage students in solving questions or analyzing answers, following up student responses by asking students to defend, refute, or explain their answers?
5. Are there frequent teacher-led and even student-led discussions (Socratic circles, fishbowl, etc.)? Are students working problems on the board, or discussing in small groups and reporting to the larger group?
6. Are teachers using time lines and charts in such a way as to compare, contrast, and juxtapose ideas and events with and against one another?
7. Are teachers using different forms of debate and discussion such that students are considering arguments and lines of thought in a cohesive way?
8. Are principles of logic integrated in classes other than logic class?
9. Does the lesson include time for reviewing of prior material, e.g., at the beginning and end of the lesson?
10. Are teachers teaching to an objective that is clear to students and evident to an observer?
11. During the lesson, do teachers assess student understanding in order to gauge whether students are comprehending the material?

Rhetoric School

The following types of activities should be observed in all courses, i.e., history, literature, math, and science, not only in the rhetoric class.

1. Do teachers or students do most of the intellectual work in the class? Are students active participants (or passive recipients) in classroom learning?
2. Do the teacher's instructions require creativity, as well as clarity, in written and spoken work?
3. What is the ratio of “teacher-talk” vs. “student-talk” time in the classroom? (The expectation is that the higher the grade level, the more classroom discussion and student participation.)
4. Do teachers attempt to engage all students? Are “discussions” primarily voluntary, or does the teacher normally use involuntary assessments? Is it possible to hide in this class and not be involved?
5. If students wait long enough, will the teacher provide the answers to their own questions? Does the teacher repeat all student answers or are the students required to listen to each others' answers?
6. Do students ask questions? Do students ask each other questions? Or is the class mainly students responding to teacher questions?
7. Do students work problems on the board or in small groups, with other students “coaching” or helping, with teachers acting as “quality control?”

8. Do students routinely discuss questions of content and meaning using seminar-style discussions? Are these discussions generally student-driven, at least in the upper rhetoric grades?
9. Is Socratic dialogue used in classrooms? Are Harkness table discussions used in the classrooms?
10. Are students frequently speaking at length in their own words in the form of presentations, etc.?
11. Does the lesson include time for reviewing of prior material, e.g., at the beginning and end of the lesson?
12. Are teachers teaching to an objective that is clear to students and evident to an observer?
13. During the lesson, do teachers assess student understanding in order to gauge whether students are comprehending the material?

Written Assignments and Grading

1. Do assignments and tests include more open-ended and essay-type questions than those at the grammar or logic levels?
2. On tests/exams are students writing complete thoughts rather than multiple choice, one-word answers, etc.?
3. Do students take oral tests/exams?
4. Is classroom participation assessed at the rhetoric level?

Classroom Observations, Teacher Training, Etc.

1. Does an administrator regularly observe classroom instruction and provide specific feedback based on these observations? Do administrators evaluate teachers on their application of the tools of learning?
2. Are teachers expected to develop lesson plans that teach to a particular objective for student learning?
3. Is ongoing teacher training provided during the school year? Are the topics of this training designed to strengthen weaknesses identified during classroom observations?
4. Do administrators provide annual teacher training in the Seven Laws of Teaching?
5. On weekly lesson plans, are teachers expected to indicate how they are teaching classically (perhaps one example for the week)?
6. Do curriculum guides include a section that reminds teachers to integrate the tools of learning?

APPENDIX H: ACCS TEACHER CERTIFICATION

Revision 1— 2004

Revision 2— 2017. Required for schools who are accredited or under accreditation renewal after January 1, 2018. Teachers who were certified under the 2004 standards are grandfathered into their current level of certification, but must meet the 2017 standards to advance to the next level.

Note on implementation: ACCS-accredited schools, with existing teacher certification programs approved by ACCS, will need to develop revised programs compliant with these guidelines when they renew ACCS school accreditation. These schools may elect to do so sooner, at their discretion, if desired.

Requirements

- A. All accredited ACCS schools must certify their full-time teaching staff in accordance with this document. (In their specific plan, schools will address how part-time staff are to be included. Part-time staff may be exempt from mandatory aspects of ACCS teacher certification.)
- B. All provisional, professional, and master level certifications must be registered with the ACCS by the accredited school.
- C. All accredited ACCS schools are asked to recognize the certification level of any teacher who transfers from another ACCS-accredited school.

Purpose

ACCS Teacher Certification provides schools and administrators with a common understanding of what a classical Christian teacher should be, and a structure by which a path to excellence can be awarded. Teacher certification should verify the presence of demonstrable philosophical understanding and competent teaching skills in the one certified. ACCS Teacher Certification has no relationship or connection to state teacher licensing or public school certification.

Philosophy

Modern (public) teacher certification prescribes a series of courses and some service in the classroom. This system arises from the idea that most people can be trained to do the job. Classical Christian philosophy asserts that teaching is a gift (Ephesians 4:8–11, Romans 12: 3–8), and a practiced art. For those who have the gift (and it is given, as all spiritual gifts, in varying degrees), it must also be developed. The ancients did this through an apprenticeship.

Rather than passing a prescribed course of classes, apprenticeship involves a combination of training, observed instruction, imitation of a master, and evaluation by a master. Historically, this process takes artisans from novice to apprentice, to journeyman, to master.

In this light, the ACCS teacher certification system is built around the local accredited school. We believe that those who serve alongside a teacher know them best. And, we believe that mastery is assessed in community, with the local organization's people as the keepers of the flame, so to speak. Nationally, we provide these guidelines to ensure that each local school is able to understand and provide a consistent standard to teachers. Rather than the apprenticeship terms above, we use three more common terms: provisional, professional, and master level certification.

Guidelines

Certification is awarded to a teacher who can demonstrate that he or she has met the following primary requirements. The categories listed below are important and none may be excluded. However, ACCS desires to establish a somewhat flexible process for demonstrating competence. The measures of competence listed below are presumed to be those most common to classical Christian schools. They are not meant to be the only means to demonstrate competence. School administrators may substitute alternative forms of assessment of teacher competencies as they deem them necessary and appropriate.

Once the administrator of an ACCS-accredited school has established the school-specific guidelines in accordance with the below framework, they must be submitted to the ACCS Director of Accreditation for mutual concurrence before becoming, or they will become the accepted norm for that school.

When a teacher completes the requirements for a given level of competency, the administrator will need to enter the ACCS Member's Resource Center (MRC) and fill out the teacher certification form indicating the teacher's name, the level attained, and the date it was attained. (See <https://mrc.classicalchristian.org/certified-teacher-list/>) ACCS will record this information in our database and mail back a certificate for the administrator to sign and present to the teacher, commemorating the achievement.

Verification

The local school administrator of an ACCS-accredited school is authorized to determine whether competency has been demonstrated for purposes of ACCS Teacher Certification. The school administrator is only authorized to grant teacher certification to teachers who work for the same school as the administrator. However, teachers themselves will receive a certificate acknowledging their certification. Teachers can expect to transfer this certificate and status as an ACCS certified teacher to any other ACCS member school.

Certification requirements

I. Provisional certification: Candidates for a provisional teaching certificate must demonstrate that they have met the following qualifications. These must be done by the start of the second year of the teacher's full-time tenure at the school.

A. Fundamental training in classical Christian education

- Evidenced by a training course taken as offered by the employee's school, prior training in classical Christian education at the collegiate level, previous classical conference attendance, ACCS

endorsed training (live or online) in classical Christian pedagogy, or the ACCS Foundation of Classical Christian Excellence course (FCCE), available in January 2019.

- Philosophy of the Christian aspects of classical Christian education
- Evidenced by the submission of a written paper to the administrator for review after completing requisite readings.

C. Philosophy of the pedagogical or classical aspects of classical Christian education

- Evidenced by the submission of a written paper to the administrator for review after completing requisite readings.

D. Knowledge of subject matter

- Evidenced by the successful completion of thirty hours of college credit, or equivalent experience in the main content area.

E. Knowledge of children

- Best evidenced by parenting of own children. May be enhanced, or, if childless, introduced through the study of children's development and training, according to biblically grounded authors. In addition, prior experience with children of the applicable age(s).

F. Knowledge of the teaching process

- Evidenced by reading and providing some written response to *The Seven Laws of Teaching*.

II. **Professional certification** (called ACCS-Certified Teacher): Teachers who have been teaching full-time at the issuing school for more than three years must achieve this level of certification or be placed on probation until it is completed.

A. Completion of all requirements for the Provisional Certification.

B. Completion of the ACCS Foundation of Classical Christian Excellence course (FCCE)¹. (This requirement to take effect January 2019.)

C. Demonstration of successful teaching with a minimum of three years of successful teaching experience at an ACCS-accredited school. Success is measured by the receipt of positive personnel evaluations during that three-year period.

¹ This course is offered periodically by the ACCS at the *Repairing the Ruins* conference, as a video course online (free to members), or through an ACCS Certified Training partner or event.

D. Evidence of continual learning

1. Documented and personal evidence that teachers are continuing to learn and grow in their interest and knowledge of the above areas, particularly in their understanding and application of the classical Christian philosophy.
2. Two practical demonstrations of this continuing interest are the amount and type of reading done, as well as continued through classical Christian teacher training.

III. **Master's certification**

- A. Completion of all requirements for the professional certification.
- B. Evidence of training in the Trivium.
- C. The involvement of the teacher in the development of uniquely classical curriculum within the school, training other teachers within the school, or conducting training in classical Christian education on a national level.
- D. The teacher will demonstrate personal knowledge and understanding of logic and rhetoric.

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<Enter Additional Information as Appropriate (e.g. Alternate Commissioner, Director of Accreditation, etc.)>

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