



STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

SCHOOL EDITION | 2021

MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS
COMMISSIONS ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

3624 Market Street | 2 West | Philadelphia, PA 19104

Telephone: 267.284.5000 | accreditation@msa-cess.org | www.msa-cess.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
The Standards for Accreditation for Schools	
<i>Foundations</i>	1
<i>Governance & Organization</i>	3
<i>Student Well-Being</i>	8
<i>Resources</i>	13
<i>Teaching & Learning</i>	17
<i>Special Purpose Indicators</i>	
<i>Online Learning</i>	22
<i>Early Childhood Education</i>	22
<i>Faith-Based Schools</i>	24
<i>Pennsylvania Schools</i>	25
<i>Boarding Program</i>	26

Rationale: Every effective school improvement process must begin with a clear definition of its preferred future and the understanding of the means to achieve it. MSA believes that the school's purpose and direction can best be expressed through three Foundation Documents: a Mission, a set of Core Values, and a Profile of a Graduate.

FOUNDATIONS

Standard for Accreditation

Key Concept F1:

The Foundation Documents are clearly aligned to the school's preferred future.

Indicators of Quality

- F1a. The school's preferred future is clearly outlined in its Mission.
- F1b. The identity and ethical norms of the school community are articulated in its Core Values.
- F1c. The Profile of a Graduate defines the skills, traits and characteristics that are expected of every graduate.
- F1d. The school's Foundation Documents are internally consistent, non-discriminatory and acknowledge the values of the school community.

Key Concept F2:

The Foundation Documents are reflective of the community's expectations.

Indicators of Quality

- F2a. The Foundation Documents are developed using input by appropriate stakeholders of the school institution and their expectations for student learning.
- F2b. The Foundation Documents are shared widely by the institution through a variety of mediums.
- F2c. The Foundation Documents are understood and supported by the institution's community of stakeholders.
- F2d. The Foundation Documents are assessed periodically to determine effectiveness using input from appropriate stakeholders.
- F2e. The Foundation Documents are respectful of all races, religions, cultures and lifestyles, as well as the values of the community and inclusive of the voices of the community.

Key Concept F3:

The Foundation Documents are used as a guide for decision-making.

Indicators of Quality

- F3a. The Foundation Documents form the basis for short and long-range decision-making.

- F3b. Institution-wide goals and school improvement objectives are directly related to the Foundation Documents.
- F3c. Written policies and procedures are consistent with the school's Foundation Documents, are implemented at all times, and are reviewed regularly.

Required Evidence

Mission Statement

Core Values

Profile of a Graduate

Plan for Growth and Improvement

Rationale: *A school must be clearly organized and effectively led in order to achieve its preferred future. MSA believes that school governance, leadership, faculty, and staff must work together collaboratively and cooperatively with the community to strategically plan for the school's continuous improvement. Policies and procedures detail roles and responsibilities of governance and leadership as well as the promotion of staff well-being.*

GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATION

Standard for Accreditation

Key Concept O1:

The school is legally chartered, licensed, and/or authorized by the appropriate civil authorities.

Indicators of Quality

- O1a. The school's governing body and/or owner ensures that the school is in compliance with all applicable statutes, ordinances, and regulations of all civil authorities of the jurisdiction(s) in which the school operates.
- O1b. The school has no legal or proprietary ambiguities in ownership, control, or responsibility.

Required Evidence:

Appropriate authorizations for operation

Key Concept O2:

The school has an organizational structure clearly detailing its positions/jobs and corresponding relationships.

Indicators of Quality

- O2a. The governing body has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines that define:
- Proper roles and responsibilities
 - Qualifications for members
 - Composition, organization, and operation
 - Terms of office for members
 - Provisions for identifying and selecting new board members when vacancies occur
 - Membership that represents constituencies served by the school where appropriate.
- O2b. The governing body provides opportunities for education of its members, including orientation and training sessions, so that all members understand their responsibilities and roles.
- O2c. The governing body conducts regularly scheduled meetings that are communicated to the school's community of stakeholders.
- O2d. School leaders are supported by stakeholders.

- O2e. School leaders possess the appropriate qualifications, experience, and competencies for their position.
- O2f. School leaders create a culture where all students achieve expected levels of performance.
- O2g. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines for the day-to-day operation of the school.
- O2h. Succession plans for key roles ensure stability.
- O2i. School personnel are adequate in number and qualified to deliver the programs, services, and activities.
- O2j. A logical and clear table of organization specifies the levels of responsibility and reporting relationships within the school.
- O2k. Written job descriptions are provided for all personnel and positions.
- O2l. The school has a process to select and evaluate all external educational organizations that deliver any part of the school program.

Required Evidence:

Succession Plan

Policies/Procedures relating to Governing Board roles and responsibilities and/or Bylaws for Governing Body

Policies/Procedures ensuring guidelines outlining day-to-day operations of the school

Organizational Chart

Written Job Descriptions

Documentation of regularly scheduled meetings of the governing body

Key Concept O3:

The school has a system in place for regularly assessing the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and all personnel.

Indicators of Quality

- O3a. The school's governing body annually evaluates itself.
- O3b. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines for annually evaluating all personnel (leadership, faculty and staff) performance.
- O3c. The annual evaluations are based on professional standards and expectations that have been communicated in advance.
- O3d. Personnel evaluations are conducted with the staff member's knowledge and results are reported in writing as well as verbally.
- O3e. Personnel are provided with an opportunity to discuss performance evaluations with the evaluator(s) and the ability to appeal evaluations to a designated level of leadership above the evaluator(s).

Required Evidence:

Policies and Procedures evaluating all personnel (leadership, faculty, and staff)
Performance Evaluation Instruments

Key Concept O4:

The school governance and leadership plan strategically for continuous school improvement.

Indicators of Quality

- O4a. The school's governance and leadership plans strategically, reflecting on its decisions and the consequences of its actions on the community of stakeholders.
- O4b. The school develops a strategic plan that is approved and supported by the school's community of stakeholders.
- O4c. Operational and strategic planning are aimed at accomplishing the school's mission and goals
- O4d. Strategic plans are based on data.
- O4e. The governing body and leadership think creatively and act responsibly when considering the school's capacities in terms of time, energy, personnel and resources when planning new initiatives, setting goals, and developing action plans.
- O4f. Action plans support strategic planning and are regularly monitored and revised as needed to ensure continuous progress.
- O4g. Governance and leadership have a documented plan to continue education in the event of an interruption to in-person instruction.

Required Evidence:

Strategic Plans and/or Plan for Growth and Improvement
Continuity of Education Plan

Key Concept O5:

The governance and leadership are responsible for maintaining clear, open, and appropriate communications with and among stakeholders.

Indicators of Quality

- O5a. Appropriate written guidelines for confidentiality in communications are clear and are implemented consistently throughout the organization.
- O5b. Members of the community of stakeholders have appropriate opportunities to provide input.
- O5c. Marketing materials related to the school's educational programs, services, activities, and resources are clear, accurate, current, and non-discriminatory.
- O5d. Written policies or procedural guidelines govern admission to the school.
- O5e. The school informs applicants for enrollment and their families of the mission of the school, the nature and extent of the educational program and services available, tuition and fees (if applicable), school policies, and expectations for satisfactory student performance.

- O5f. Documented policies or procedural guidelines govern the placement of students in the appropriate educational levels and the transfer of academic credits.
- O5g. The school provides an orientation program for new students and their families to share the school's foundation documents, educational program, services, policies, and expectations.
- O5h. The school has and implements policies and procedures for appropriate communication regarding social media, website, photographs, newsletters, etc.

Required Evidence:

Policies/Procedures governing students services of the school (admissions, placement of students in appropriate educational levels, transfer of academic credits)

Policies/Procedures defining appropriate student confidentiality and protection in communication concerning students in social media, website, photographs, newsletters, etc.

Key Concept O6:

School governance and leadership are responsible for safety and are expected to model ethical behavior to promote a safe and orderly environment.

Indicators of Quality

- O6a. A written code of conduct is followed by the governing body, all personnel (including contractors), and students.
- O6b. Any consequences of infractions of the written code of conduct are applied fairly and uniformly.
- O6c. Documented policies and procedures address student and staff academic integrity and plagiarism.
- O6d. Documented policies or procedures ensure courses and materials meet content copyright law and fair use guidelines.
- O6e. The community of stakeholders maintain appropriate and constructive relationships characterized by mutual trust and cooperation.
- O6f. Personnel (including contractors providing services) feel safe in school.
- O6g. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines for due diligence in the hiring process to ensure that all members of the staff are eligible and continue to be eligible to work with children.
- O6h. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines for diligence to ensure that all volunteers are eligible and continue to be eligible to work with children.
- O6i. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines for due diligence to ensure that employees of providers of contracted services are eligible and continue to be eligible to work with children.
- O6j. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines for appropriate orientation and supervision for volunteers, contracted services, and service providers not employed by the school.

Required Evidence:

Policies/Procedures addressing student and staff code of conduct and academic integrity (including plagiarism)

Policies/Procedures ensuring course and materials meet content copyright law and fair use guidelines

Policies/Procedures ensuring diligence with employees, volunteers, contracted services personnel and service providers are eligible to work with children

Code of Conduct or equivalent

Key Concept O7:

School policies and procedures promote a positive work climate for all personnel.

Indicators of Quality

- O7a. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines for ensuring a positive work environment.
- O7b. There are clear lines of two-way communication between faculty and administration.
- O7c. The school promotes a sense of collegiality, high expectations for performance, trust, support, recognition for accomplishments and contributions, and pride in their school among the staff.
- O7d. The school promotes professional satisfaction and good general morale in promoting its mission.
- O7e. Staff are encouraged and supported to offer and pursue new ideas in accordance with their interests.
- O7f. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines for orienting and mentoring of new staff members.
- O7g. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines for determining adequate compensation, reasonable workloads, acceptable working conditions, and defining just and fair treatment for all members of its staff.
- O7h. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines for handling complaints/ grievances by members of the staff.

Require Evidence:

Policies/Procedures to ensure the school provides a positive work environment, adequate compensation, reasonable workloads, acceptable working conditions and complaints/grievances by members of staff

Faculty/Staff Handbook

Rationale: *Effective learning requires a nurturing school community focused on student well-being. MSA believes the school must ensure the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of its students. Student well-being is developed in a school culture that encourages creativity, active engagement, and collaboration with families and the community.*

STUDENT WELL-BEING

Standard for Accreditation

Key Concept W1:

The school leadership creates and supports a safe and secure environment for all students.

Indicators of Quality

- W1a. The school's students feel safe in the school.
- W1b. Written policies and/or procedural guidelines governing the school's provisions for the health and safety of its students, staff, and visitors are regularly reviewed and updated.

Child Protection

- W1c. The school is cognizant of cultural expectations of its school community and complies with the legal and ethical expectations regarding child abuse within the jurisdiction in which it operates, as well as international expectations for the rights of children.
- W1d. The school has developed and adopted an appropriate definition of child abuse including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, neglect, and inappropriate behavior of children towards other children.
- W1e. The school has a policy approved by the governing body that describes how it is committed to preventing and responding appropriately if children are harmed, or if allegations of harm to children are made.
- W1f. All reports of suspected or disclosed abuse and any actions taken by the school are confidential and are securely archived, regardless of the conclusions reached.
- W1g. The staff has a scheduled program of regular systematic professional training (for staff, contractors, and volunteers) on student safeguarding, child abuse prevention, identification, intervention, and reporting, conducted by trained members of the faculty or qualified external providers.
- W1h. A person or team is clearly responsible for all child protection matters; procedures are clearly defined.
- W1i. The school has clearly defined leadership responsibilities for child safety and duty of care.
- W1j. Formal opportunities to educate students on a full range of child protection topics (such as bullying, personal safety, physical abuse, manipulation, grooming, online safety, healthy sexual behavior, neglect and negligent behavior, self-harm, staying safe away from home, commercial exploitation and disclosing abuse) are embedded in the school program, inclusive of an online environment, and led by trained members of the faculty or qualified external providers.

W1k. The school has specific child protection policies, practices and faculty and staff training programs to ensure the safety and welfare of all students on excursions, trips and student exchanges including any homestay, residential arrangements, or boarding facilities.

Emergency Plans

W1l. The school regularly reviews and updates its plans for responding to emergencies and crises.

W1m. The school has and implements written procedures and functional equipment with which to communicate during fire and other emergencies, to summon assistance, to evacuate all school facilities, and to shelter in place (including any boarding, satellite, or athletic facilities).

W1n. The school conducts evacuation drills and maintains written records of drills.

W1o. The school conducts shelter in place drills and maintains written records of drills.

W1p. The school conducts other relevant drills based on country, federal, and state jurisdiction environment and location needs, and maintains written records of drills.

W1q. The school assesses the effectiveness of its plans and revises them accordingly based on the outcomes of the drills.

W1r. The school provides appropriate training for all staff members on implementing the school's emergency and crisis plans, including but not limited to emergency drills, handling accidents and illnesses, and universal precautions for preventing the spread of infectious diseases.

W1s. The school has a procedure to ensure (such as a risk assessments) a safe and secure environment for students during all off-campus school-sponsored activities including field trips.

Physical Security/School Access/Supervision

W1t. Students are appropriately supervised during the school day and during all school activities.

W1u. The school has and implements a system to account for students at all times.

W1v. The school has an effective system to control access to the school by visitors and other non-school personnel, including volunteers.

Required Evidence:

Emergency Management Policies and Procedures

Child protection policies/procedures

Emergency Drill logs

Evidence that Emergency Procedures are distributed appropriately

Records of most recent health & safety inspections

Key Concept W2:

Student health and wellness are a main priority of school leadership.

Indicators of Quality

W2a. The school provides appropriate and adequate health care to its students during the school day and makes provisions for appropriate health care at school functions that take place away from the school's premises.

W2b. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that all students receive adequate nutrition.

- W2c. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines to manage the storage and administration of student medications.
- W2d. The school has and implements policies and/or procedural guidelines for maintaining confidentiality and sharing medical records and health information of students and members of the staff in compliance with applicable laws. (FERPA, HIPAA, confidentiality, GDPR)
- W2e. The governing body and leadership ensure that the school has effective relationships with community organizations that are able to provide appropriate support, advice, and services related to mental and physical health, safety, and child protection.
- W2f. The school includes in its educational program and activities opportunities for students to develop knowledge, attitudes, and practices necessary for personal wellness and a healthy lifestyle.
- W2g. The school has formal learning programs related to child protection, bullying, personal safety, etc.
- W2h. The school has policies and procedures relating to child protection, bullying, personal safety, etc.
- W2i. Students know what to do if they feel uncomfortable or have concerns including mistreatment, abuse, or mental health issues.
- W2j. The school implements policies, procedures and/or programs to promote awareness, prevention, and responsiveness to issues related to the social and emotional well-being of the students.
- W2k. The school provides proactive and responsive student support services that address students' emotional and social needs.

Required Evidence:

Policies and Procedures relating to child protection, bullying and personal safety

Policies/procedures/programs to promote awareness, prevention, and responsiveness to issues related to the social and emotional well-being of the students.

Confidentiality Practices/Guidelines

Procedures for storage and retention of student health records

Key Concept W3:

Student activities and experiences are provided for all students.

Indicators of Quality

- W3a. All school programs and activities are adequately and appropriately planned, supervised, resourced, and staffed with qualified personnel.
- W3b. All students are offered opportunities through experiences to build their skills in handling responsibility, taking initiative, leadership, cooperation, and self-direction.
- W3c. The school provides non-discriminatory student experiences that are age- and developmentally appropriate and that supplement and enhance the school's educational program.
- W3d. Activities are varied, developmentally appropriate, and enhance the educational program.

- W3e. Students, staff, families, and the community are provided with appropriate opportunities to offer input regarding the school's student activities.
- W3f. Staff members, parents, and other volunteers who lead student activities are approved by the school's leadership, suitably qualified, and provide appropriate supervision to students.
- W3g. Activities are adequately financed, periodically reviewed for their effectiveness, and appropriate for the school's mission.
- W3h. Students are provided with a program of co-curricular or extra-curricular programs/activities or the school actively encourages and promotes students' involvement in such activities in their community.
- W3i. Students are provided with opportunities for service learning to address meaningful community needs.
- W3j. The school includes in its educational program and activities opportunities for students to develop knowledge, attitudes, and practices necessary for personal wellness and a healthy lifestyle.
- W3k. Students are provided opportunities for collaboration and teamwork.
- W3l. Procedures are in place to provide students with opportunities to suggest additions or changes to the available student activities and experiences

Required Evidence:

Policies/Procedures on Student Life & Student Activities

Key Concept W4:

Policies and procedures promote a fair and positive school climate for students.

Indicators of Quality

- W4a. The school recognizes and celebrates student accomplishments, contributions, responsibilities and culture, ethnicity, and heritage in meaningful ways.
- W4b. Students understand and abide by the Code of Conduct that clearly defines expected behavior and documented disciplinary actions.
- W4c. Students understand the rights and responsibilities of engaging in a digital society.
- W4d. Students exhibit a sense of pride in their school.
- W4e. Interactions among the students, and between students and staff/volunteers are appropriate and characterized by respect, trust, and fairness.
- W4f. Students feel respected and supported by faculty and administration.
- W4g. Through policies and activities, the school encourages the development of strong character, integrity and ethical behavior in its students as aligned with the Foundation Documents.
- W4h. The school encourages the development of student initiative in the pursuit of their unique interests and individual creativity.

W4i. The school encourages a culture of inclusivity, collaboration and teamwork among the school, students, and their families.

Required Evidence:

Student Code of Conduct

Policies/procedures for Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism

Student Handbook

Rationale: *In order for a school to attain its preferred future, it must have sufficient resources. MSA believes those resources include finances, facilities, transportation, food services, and technology.*

RESOURCES

Standard for Accreditation

Key Concept R1:

Sufficient and stable financial resources are dedicated to attaining the expected learning outcomes identified in the Foundation Documents.

Indicators of Quality

- R1a. Sound financial practices ensure the successful delivery of school programs as defined in the school’s Foundation Documents.
- R1b. Business practices are ethical and follow accepted budgeting and accounting principles.
- R1c. The school is free of any contingent financial liabilities or ongoing litigations that could affect the school’s ability to continue operation.
- R1d. Income and expenditures are in balance.
- R1e. Written policies and procedures, aligned with the school’s Foundation Documents, require prudent control over the school’s finances and financial operations.
- R1f. Oversight and conduct of financial and business operations are entrusted only to those who possess the appropriate qualifications.
- R1g. Short and long-range financial plans ensure resources are available to deliver the educational program and services.
- R1h. The school conducts annual financial audits, external reviews by qualified external agencies, or provides other evidence of financial viability and stability.
- R1i. The school responds appropriately to the findings and recommendations of financial audits/external reviews.
- R1j. Staff and other stakeholders have appropriate opportunities to participate in determining financial priorities to achieve the expected learning outcomes identified in the Foundation Documents.
- R1k. Insurance coverage is adequate for protecting the interests and operations of the school and in compliance with the civil jurisdiction. (e.g., business interruption, casualty, property, liability insurance for employees and the governing body/owner)
- R1l. Tuition and fee schedules (if applicable) are developed and published.
- R1m. Tuition, collection, and refund policies are written and followed.
- R1n. Families enrolling students in the school are informed about financial obligations for attending the school.

Required Evidence:

Operational Budget

Reports of External Audit or Reviews of the School's Internal Management Reports/Finances conducted within the last two years (for main campus as well as any branches)

Proof of Insurance Coverage

Policies/Procedures related to finances, financial aid, and refunds

Financial plan including Multi-year (last year, current year, next year)

Tuition/Fee Schedule (if applicable)

Key Concept R2:

The facilities are satisfactory or acceptable in quality and quantity to achieve the school's mission. The facilities are safe, clean, and well-maintained.

Indicators of Quality

- R2a. Facilities are sufficient and appropriate for all aspects of the school's educational programs, activities, and services including: Instructional areas/classrooms, Administrative offices, Conference rooms, Residential Boarding (students and faculty), Health Services, Student Activities, Student Services, Safe and secure storage of school property, student belongings, equipment, official records, and materials (e.g., cleaning supplies and chemicals).
- R2b. The learning environment is aesthetically appropriate, effective, and supports the educational goals.
- R2c. Budgeting includes the resources needed for facilities, equipment, and materials.
- R2d. The school plans for, funds, and schedules regular preventative measures, repairs, replacement, and maintenance of its facilities, equipment, and materials.
- R2e. Facilities, equipment, and materials are regularly and systematically assessed.
- R2f. The school makes provisions for the capacities of its facilities and equipment before adopting new programs.
- R2g. Sufficient systems are in place to monitor and provide appropriate air quality throughout its facilities.
- R2h. Adequate and appropriate lighting exists throughout the facilities.
- R2i. Safe drinking water is available for students, staff, and visitors to the school.
- R2j. Appropriate and safe temperature is maintained throughout the facility.
- R2k. The school is in compliance with the requirements of all appropriate civil authorities in which the school is located for fire safety and occupancy.

Required Evidence:

Health and Safety Inspection Reports

Policies/Procedures related to facilities and maintenance

Maintenance and Facilities Plan(s)

Certificate of Occupancy (for all schools located in the United States, if available for schools located outside of the United States)

Key Concept R3:

Technology resources (as defined as hardware, software, platforms, policies, and procedures for the use by students and staff) support the attainment of expected student outcomes.

Indicators of Quality

- R3a. Technology resources are appropriate and adequate in scope, quantity, and quality to attain the expected student outcomes.
- R3b. The school has and implements written policies and/or procedural guidelines for the ethical and appropriate use for acquiring information and using technology resources.
- R3c. The school has a written data protection policy that is followed and shared.
- R3d. The school has policies for acceptable use of administrative technology and confidentiality in telecommunications.
- R3e. Staff and students are provided with appropriate opportunities to offer input into the types, quality, and format of the information resources provided.
- R3f. Staff and students are provided with training for the appropriate, ethical, and most effective uses of the technology resources.
- R3g. Technology resources are age and developmentally appropriate.
- R3h. Technology resources are properly organized and maintained for ready access and use by students and the staff.
- R3i. Technology resources are reviewed periodically for relevancy, currency, renewal, and alignment with the school's curricula and instructional programs.
- R3j. Technology resources are appropriately supported with funding from the school's budget and aligned with the school's technology plan.
- R3k. The student information management system, finances, business operations, facilities maintenance, and communications are efficient and effective.
- R3l. The school provides appropriate technological support services for students, families, and staff.

Required Evidence

Technology plan, including but not limited to inventory and replacement schedule
Policies & Practices regarding technology including but not limited to data protection (GDPR [General Data Protection Regulation] compliance where necessary) and acceptable use

Key Concept R4:

Transportation and food services are sufficient in quality and quantity to achieve the school's mission. Transportation is safe, clean, and well-maintained. Food Services are well-maintained and based on nutritional standards.

Indicators of Quality

- R4a. Transportation services comply with the requirements of the civil jurisdictions within which the school is located.
- R4b. Transportation services include procedures and equipment in compliance with the safety requirements of all appropriate civil authorities.
- R4c. Written policies or procedural guidelines ensure the safety of students when being transported to and from school and school events by means provided by the school.
- R4d. All transportation personnel of the school or those contracted by the school are authorized and qualified to transport students.
- R4e. The school has and implements procedures for the students' safe arrival to and departure from the school.
- R4f. The school has and implements written policies or procedural guidelines related to food services.
- R4g. Food services personnel meet the health and training requirements of all civil authorities of the jurisdictions in which the school is located.
- R4h. All food services personnel are authorized and qualified to work with students.
- R4i. Food service facilities are inspected regularly and meet the health and safety requirements of the jurisdiction in which the school is located.
- R4j. Food preparation and dining areas are functional and hygienic.
- R4k. Meals provided by the school meet generally accepted nutritional standards, and information about nutritional values is available.

Required Evidence

Inspection and/or Safety Reports

Rationale: *Teaching and learning are the core of every school. MSA believes curriculum and instruction and assessment must be linked to the school's Foundation Documents, be contemporary, reflective of best practices, and supported by appropriate professional development. Student performance must be measured and appropriate student services be provided to ensure all students reach their full potential.*

TEACHING & LEARNING

Standard for Accreditation

Key Concept T1:

The educational program is based on appropriate content and written curriculum aligned with generally accepted learning standards.

Indicators of Quality

- T1a. The curriculum supports the school's Foundation Documents.
- T1b. Curricula consist of carefully planned and well-executed programs of study.
- T1c. Curricula meet the needs of the student population served by the school.
- T1d. The educational program considers the ages, cultures, and varying levels of ability of students when setting expected student outcomes.
- T1e. The educational program includes programs of study which have a scope and sequence, knowledge and skills to be learned, expectations for the levels of student learning and performance, instructional methods, and methods of assessment.
- T1f. The school's educational program includes areas of language arts and literature (including early language development and literacy skills, speaking, writing, and listening communication skills), mathematics, the sciences, social sciences, world languages, visual and performing arts, health, and physical education.
- T1g. The educational program includes opportunities that promote students' critical thinking, problem-solving skills, personal and social skills, and the transfer of learning to other curricular areas and real-life experiences.
- T1h. The educational program includes experiences to promote global awareness and anti-racism, as well as an understanding of diverse cultures, power and lifestyles.
- T1i. The educational program defines expected outcomes for student learning and performance in terms of knowledge, understandings, attitudes, skills, and habits to be demonstrated.
- T1j. Curriculum guides are current, functional, available to and used by teachers, and reflect current research and proven practices.
- T1k. The school has guidelines and criteria for regularly reviewing and revising programs of study, developing new programs, and eliminating programs.

- T1l. The skills and knowledge of the curriculum are well-articulated and coordinated between all teachers at each grade level and by teachers across grade levels through both horizontal and vertical articulation.
- T1m. Information resources are supportive of the school’s plan for growth and improvement and expectations for student performance.
- T1n. Experiences exist for the use of technology in teaching and learning and the application of knowledge and skills learned.
- T1o. The curriculum is designed to ensure the alignment of teaching strategies, learning activities, instructional support, instructional resources, and assessment.
- T1p. The curriculum is designed to ensure the alignment of teaching strategies, learning activities, instructional support, instructional resources, and assessment.
- T1q. An overview of the school’s educational program is published.
- T1r. The school collaborates with families to develop, if necessary, appropriate strategies to assist the students to learn and perform at the expected levels.
- T1s. The educational program provides experiences that prepare students with the knowledge, skills, and habits necessary for a successful transition to the next level of education or work.

Required Evidence:

Written Curriculum guides for each component of the educational program
 Scope and sequence charts

Key Concept T2:

A variety of instructional methods are used to deliver the curriculum and learning settings are developmentally appropriate for students.

Indicators of Quality

- T2a. Instruction reflects proven practices and current research and is supported by professional development.
- T2b. Instruction is modified to meet the needs of the unique student populations served by the school.
- T2c. Scope and pacing of instruction are appropriately differentiated for every student.
- T2d. Students are provided with additional instruction to address specific learning abilities.
- T2e. Instruction is designed to foster active engagement of students in the learning process.
- T2f. Instructional activities provide opportunities for both specialization and exploration of content knowledge and skills.
- T2g. Instruction includes a variety of activities that include options for in-depth learning through authentic problem-solving and experience.
- T2h. Instruction is delivered in a variety of learning settings (e.g., individual, small group, large group).
- T2i. Meaningful educational experiences outside of the classroom environment are used to promote student learning.

- T2j. Class sizes allow for the use of a variety of instructional strategies.
- T2k. Instruction takes into account the design and use of physical space.

Required Evidence:

Sample Lesson Plans

Key Concept T3:

Assessment of student performance is used to measure individual and aggregate student progress and the effectiveness of the entire educational program.

Indicators of Quality

- T3a. The leadership and staff are committed to and take responsibility for student learning and performance.
- T3b. The school has and implements written policies and procedures regarding assessing the levels of student learning and performance.
- T3c. There is a plan for continuous improvement of student performance.
- T3d. Assessment results are used to provide additional services based on student needs.
- T3e. Student performance is assessed consistently through standardized and alternative methods using quantifiable and observable evidence.
- T3f. The assessment program is used to make informed decisions regarding individual student performance, the effectiveness of the curriculum, and the efficacy of instruction.
- T3g. The assessment program reflects understanding of the diverse needs of the student population.
- T3h. Assessment reflects proven practices and current research supported by professional development.
- T3i. The assessment program monitors learning by individual students as well as cohorts of students as they move through the school.
- T3j. The assessment program compares student outcomes with the performance of comparable local, state, and/or national groups of students.
- T3k. The assessment program facilitates the practice of students monitoring their own learning progress.
- T3l. Student performance is assessed regularly and frequently using formal and informal systematic and objective processes.
- T3m. The school's assessment program is supported through technology.
- T3n. The school maintains appropriate records of student learning and performance.
- T3o. The school uses generally accepted standards for the control, use of, and access to records of student learning and performance that meet the requirements of laws governing confidentiality of student records.
- T3p. The school communicates regularly with families regarding student progress in learning.

- T3q. The school reports the results of its assessment of student learning and performance regularly, accurately, and clearly to the school's community of stakeholders.

Required Evidence:

Assessment Policies and Procedures

Examples of Student Performance (Internal and/or External)

Example of Student Transcript

Example of Student Report Card

Key Concept T4:

Support services are provided to assist every student in achieving academic success.

Indicators of Quality

- T4a. The school provides student services that address developing students' academic, personal, emotional, social, and career skills.
- T4b. The school provides additional services or revisions to current services based on identified student needs.
- T4c. Student services staff are appropriately certified, qualified to carry out their duties and responsibilities, and adhere to a strict set of ethical standards.
- T4d. Provisions are made to ensure equity among students regarding access to services, programs and activities.
- T4e. Procedures exist for the referral of students who exhibit behaviors that may present barriers to learning.
- T4f. School counselors work collaboratively with school resource officers, school nurses, child study team members and other school based intervention team members in the interest of student and family assistance.
- T4g. The school provides student services that are documented by maintaining appropriate records, including student data that are current, comprehensive, and readily available for use by the staff.
- T4h. Student services use the results of follow-up studies to help determine their effectiveness.
- T4i. Student services staff take appropriate and reasonable measures to ensure that confidentiality is respected.
- T4j. The school provides or refers families to appropriate related services and/or accommodations to meet students' needs.
- T4k. Student services are proactive and preventative and includes programs in concert with classroom instruction on topics such as, but not limited to, conflict resolution, anti-violence, cyber bullying and suicide prevention.
- T4l. The school is in compliance with all requirements of the jurisdictions in which the school is located related to students with special needs.
- T4m. The school provides families with information about child development and learning.

Required Evidence:

Student Services Policies and Procedures
Sample IEPs or equivalent
Admissions Criteria
Description of guidance and counseling services available
Examples of Recruiting and Marketing Materials
Policies related to student services

Key Concept T5:

Professional development ensures effective design and implementation of the educational program.

Indicators of Quality

- T5a. A program of professional development based on the needs of the school and staff is funded.
- T5b. The staff is provided opportunities to offer input into the content of professional development experiences.
- T5c. All staff are provided with professional development opportunities that address individual and school-wide needs.
- T5d. The school has and implements personnel policies that include an appraisal system and professional development programs that focus explicitly on staff behaviors that are to be encouraged in the classroom.
- T5e. The leadership has a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of professional development.
- T5f. The leadership stays well informed of and implements proven practices identified in educational research and literature.
- T5g. The leadership ensures that professional and support staff members stay well informed about educational developments.
- T5h. The leadership supports the staff's participation in professional organizations.

Required Evidence:

Professional Development Plan

SPECIAL PURPOSE INDICATORS

The indicators below are for specific areas not fully addressed in the 5 Standards for Accreditation and may only apply to certain programs or types of schools.

Online Learning

Indicators for schools that deliver all or part of their educational program through online learning

- OL1. The teachers effectively use the online delivery system to ensure teaching and learning.
- OL2. Every effort is made to ensure that all students have access to the internet and necessary devices.
- OL3. The school provides an appropriate Learning Management System and overall academic technology infrastructure.
- OL4. The school facilitates student interaction (synchronous and asynchronous) with teachers and other students through a variety of means as an essential characteristic of the educational program.
- OL5. The school informs students and their families (if appropriate) about any aspects of the educational program that are created or delivered by an organization other than the school.
- OL6. Required accommodations are available to meet a variety of student needs for online learners.
- OL7. The school uses curriculum and instructional materials that are appropriate for online learning.
- OL8. The school has and implements documented policies and/or procedural guidelines to ensure the authenticity of the students' identity when assessing learning and performance electronically.
- OL9. The school actively encourages students to start, continue, and finish their programs of study within the time prescribed.
- OL10. The school provides opportunities for student engagement with their peers and others outside the classroom.

Required Evidence:

Policies/ Procedures for identifying students when being assessed

Early Childhood Education

Indicators for schools with early childhood education programs

- EC1. The early childhood program seeks to achieve applicable teacher and/or staff-to-children ratios.
- EC2. Staff behaviors such as teacher interactions with children, acknowledgement of age-appropriate development, and developmentally appropriate instructional and behavioral modification practices are encouraged and documented.
- EC3. The school provides care for infants that is consistent with current professional practice, especially with respect to sleeping, bottle-feeding, diapering, sanitation, nurturing, and daily interactions.
- EC4. The school regularly sanitizes surfaces where children eat and sleep and items they can put into their mouths.

- EC5. The school consults regularly with health professionals regarding the health risks of working with young children.
- EC6. The early childhood educational program considers as part of its educational program, everything that happens during the day, including while children play and explore, eat, interact, toilet, take walks or field trips, engage in planned experiences, and are involved in transitions such as arrival, clean-up, and departure.
- EC7. The early childhood educational program supports language development.
- EC8. The early childhood educational program includes activities that are designed to prompt exploration, support growing independence, and minimize disruptions/distractions.
- EC9. The early childhood educational program provides a good balance of child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities in the daily plan.
- EC10. The early childhood educational program provides individualized instruction for infants and young toddlers primarily and, as appropriate, activities in small groups.
- EC11. The early childhood educational program provides a balance of quiet and active times and flexibly incorporates learners' natural routines into the rhythm of the day.
- EC12. The early childhood educational program provides daily indoor and outdoor play with a balance between large-muscle and small-muscle as well as organized and unstructured experiences.
- EC13. The early childhood educational program provides development of early language and literacy skills through interactive activities, such as: conversation, storytelling, singing, poetry, finger plays, games, puppets, pretend play, shared reading of picture books, and other meaningful learning experiences.
- EC14. The early childhood educational program provides opportunities for increasing independence in use of materials and equipment and in self-care.
- EC15. The early childhood educational program provides structured and unstructured opportunities for children's active involvement with people and materials.
- EC16. The early childhood educational program provides spontaneous learning and activities that build on children's repertoires and curiosity.
- EC17. The early childhood educational program provides learning areas designed for individual and group exploration and growth that support challenge and consolidation in the relevant domains of development.
- EC18. The early childhood educational program provides materials for gross and fine motor activities.
- EC19. The early childhood educational program provides developmentally appropriate learning resources for outdoor activities.
- EC20. The early childhood educational program provides daily opportunities for creative expression.
- EC21. Children are observed by teachers on a daily basis using a systematic and objective process for formal and informal observation and documentation.
- EC22. Assessments used to measure student learning and development are aligned with age-appropriate early childhood standards for learning.

EC23. Learning resources include intentional, appropriate supports for language, literacy, and numeracy development.

Required Evidence:

Policies/ Procedures for care of infants

Faith Based Schools

Indicators for faith-based schools

- FB1. The school portrays an identifiable integration of faith, life, and culture in the Foundation Documents.
- FB2. The school's religious identity is visible in symbols and artifacts throughout the school, if appropriate and applicable.
- FB3. The spiritual life of the school and its community is a priority in all planning activities.
- FB4. The religious values of the school are considered when making decisions regarding the school improvement plan.
- FB5. The school's religious identity is integrated into its school-wide goals and objectives.
- FB6. The religious tenets of the school are articulated and modeled by the school's governing body and leadership.
- FB7. The school's governing body and leadership maintain the religious identity of the school as a priority.
- FB8. The school's governing body and leadership use the school's religious values and identity to inform its policies, procedures and decisions.
- FB9. The school's governing body and leadership accept the authority of the sponsoring religious institution, if applicable.
- FB10. The school's governing body and leadership include an attestation to the religious beliefs and demonstration of commitment and involvement in the faith community when hiring the school's leadership and members of the staff.
- FB11. The school's governing body and leadership give appropriate attention to building a respectful and collaborative faith community among the faculty and staff.
- FB12. The school has and implements written admissions and placement policies or procedural guidelines that are consistent with the school's religious values and traditions.
- FB13. Members of the faculty are provided with opportunities to advance their understanding of the religious beliefs and foundation documents of the school.
- FB14. The school's programs of study, activities, athletics, codes of conduct, and discipline actions reflect the religious values and traditions expressed in the school's foundational documents.
- FB15. All student activities and athletics reflect the faith formation of the students.
- FB16. Opportunities for prayer and/or expressions of faith are integrated into the school's curricula and daily activities.

- FB17. The educational program reflects appropriately the religious nature of the school as expressed in the school’s foundation documents.
- FB18. The educational program includes teachings that are grounded in the beliefs, values, and traditions of the sponsoring faith-community.
- FB19. The educational program includes objectives and opportunities for faith development and community service beyond the classroom that reflect the mission of the school.
- FB20. The educational program provides regular faith-based experiences that foster the religious formation of the students.
- FB21. The school includes in its assessments of students’ learning and performance knowledge and application of the school’s religious beliefs and values.
- FB22. The school provides student services that reflect the school’s religious identity and foundation documents, enrich the academic program, and support the development of student and family life.
- FB23. The school provides student services that are delivered cooperatively by counseling and campus ministry personnel.
- FB24. Formal and informal professional development opportunities are provided for the spiritual development of the faculty and staff members, if applicable.

Required Evidence:

Policies/ Procedures related to the faith-based identity

Pennsylvania Schools

Indicators for schools located in Pennsylvania

- PA1. The school has and implements written policies and procedures that in accordance with Act 24 of 2011 and Section 111 of the Pennsylvania School Code, require all applicants for employment with the institution, including employees of independent contractors but excluding employees who do not have direct contact with students, and student teacher candidates to undergo the following background checks prior to being hired or contracted:
 - a. Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Records Check. Applies to individuals hired as of January 1, 1986;
 - b. PA Department of Public Welfare Child Abuse History Clearance; and
 - c. Federal Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) in a manner required by the Department of Education.
- PA2. The school has and implements written policies and procedures that in accordance with Act 24 of 2011, require all employees as of September 29, 2011 who have not been subject to a previous background check to:
 - a. provide assurances on form PDE-6004 that they have not been previously arrested or convicted of a Section 111(e) offense; or
 - b. if they refuse to submit form PDE-6004, are required to submit a current background check under Section 111.

- PA3. The school has and implements written policies and procedures that require the institution to review applicants' required background check reports prior to their being hired or contracted to determine the fitness of the individual to work in a position in which s/he will have contact with children.
- PA4. The school has and implements written policies and procedures that require the institution to keep on file copies of the required background check reports for all staff hired or contracted on or after April 1, 2007.

Boarding Program

Indicators for schools with a Boarding Program (including Homestay)

- BD1. The school has a clear intention and purpose for its boarding program.
- BD2. The school provides the necessary supports for students to develop healthy relationships with adults in loco parentis and with other students.
- BD3. The school provides for student privacy, recreation, and religious practice.
- BD4. Qualified personnel are responsible for all boarding students at all times, including non-academic times.
- BD5. The school provides the students an orientation to boarding facilities and procedures for students.
- BD6. The school has a system in place to communicate with families/caregivers of students.
- BD7. The school takes into account the number and individual needs of participating students when planning for and implementing the boarding program.
- BD8. Boarding program staff and/or representatives are appropriately oriented and trained.
- BD9. The school has clear, documented policies for its boarding program.
- BD10. The school provides planned structure for time outside of the classroom including evenings and weekends.
- BD11. The school has and implements a system to account for boarding program students at all times.
- BD12. The school's boarding school program provides appropriate and adequate healthcare and safety for students and residential boarding staff.
- BD13. The school conducts emergency drills for boarding facilities and maintains written records of drills.
- BD14. The school provides appropriate training for all residential staff members on implementing the emergency and crisis plans, including but not limited to handling accidents and illnesses, universal precautions for preventing the spread of infectious diseases, and child abuse prevention and reporting.
- BD15. The school ensures an effective system to control access to the boarding facilities.

Required Evidence:

Orientation Agenda
Policies/Procedures