NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

**STANDARDS BASED CUMULATIVE ANNUAL REPORT/School Improvement Plan**

**(Please use this form and complete on computer.)**

**Part I: Basic Information**

School: St. Peter’s Lutheran Early Childhood Education Center

Address: 5421 France Ave S. City, State, ZIP: Edina, MN 55410

LCMS District: MN South School E-mail address: tgrimm@stpetersedina.org ECEC Director: Tosca Grimm

Co-accredited by (if applicable):

Report is for year (Circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (Time to re-apply) Date of most recent NLSA site visit: May 4-5, 2011

**Administrator’s Signature Date**

**School Board Chair’s Signature Date**

**(By this coming from the e-mail address above I state that each recommendation in the Visiting Team Report either has or will receive serious consideration for action.)**

**This report is due in your district office no later than May 15. The district accreditation committee will review by June 15.**

**The annual fee is due in the NLSA office no later than October 15.**

**Part II: List any significant School Improvements or Changes this year: (Fill in as needed.)**

* **A dedicated ECEC Director, ECEC Assistant Director, and DCO have been hired who are ready to continue Kingdom work alongside the ECEC faculty!**
* **In May we are completing plans for an updated electronic system of daily communication with parents, lesson planning coordination, and portfolio enhancement via the Tadpoles program with ipad use.**
* **Our elementary school model is ending this school year, last day 5/23/14. The next year will be devoted to assessment of community needs and parental interest for rebirthing elementary school-age ministry opportunities. This creates a substantial change for St. Peter’s community this coming year, though the ECEC will continue in its same model.**

**Part III: Recommendation Report: (List any Major Deficiencies first.) (To move to the next column, click “Tab.”)**

**(Parenthetical comments are samples of how the form is to be completed.)**

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| **Section**  **&**  **Standard Number** | **Visiting Team** Concern **and Recommendation** | **Target**  **Year** | **Year**  **Addressed** | **Action Taken** |
| **1A:**  **Philosophy** | St. Peter’s Philosophy of Education does not address the importance of play in early education. The philosophy does emphasize development in the spiritual domain, but not specifically in the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical developmental domains (1,4).  **Recommendation: Add a statement to the philosophy such as:** ***“We believe that young children learn and develop at different rates and in different ways. We believe that spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive and physical development take place in an atmosphere of discovery, encouragement and play. Play is valued as the means by which children learn and develop in all domains.”*** | **2013** | **2014** | To be addressed as we go through our Vision 20/20 process that will work to unify the mission and vision of the school and church.  2013 – Being addressed this summer to coincide with new vision and mission for entire St. Peter’s ministry.  **2014 – Philosophy statement is included in the ECEC Parent Handbook and Child Care Program Plan. Philosophy and Curriculum includes whole child learning – spirit, mind, and body – across the five developmental domains of Physical, Intellectual, Language/Literacy, Emotional/Social and Spiritual, with Christian worldview influence throughout in a play-based DAP setting.** |
|  | The teaching staff told us they recently met to begin talking about how to connect the curriculum at each age level. The work includes making lists about what they expect the children to do or to know when they enter their classrooms. Each teacher develops her own list of learning goals and ways to assess development.  **Recommendation: Adopt a set of learning goals/standards for each age group: birth to age 3 and age 3 to 5. Adopt a set of Kindergarten standards.** **The Minnesota Department of Education has written developmental goals for each age group mentioned here. All are aligned and build on each other. We recommend the teaching staff review each list and adapt/adopt them. These lists can then be the building blocks for play-based learning in each classroom, as well as a play-based assessment system for the center.** | **2013-2014** | **2013-2014** | We are in the beginning stages of working with Lynn Gehrke from Concordia University, St. Paul in adopting a set of learning standards/goals that will be used for authentic, play-based assessment portfolios for each child. The goal is for this to be fully in place by fall 2013.  **2014 – Our curriculum across the developmental domains appropriate to each age group aligns with the MN Early Indicators of Progress (0-3 and 3-5). Child portfolios and regular assessments reflect this. Faculty uses curriculum grids which indicate the domains addressed in each week’s lesson and environment planning.** |
|  | The teachers are clearly knowledgeable about their children and their strengths/work areas. They have plans for each day and appear to follow the questions/ideas of the children, as well, to make learning meaningful.  **Recommendation: Display weekly or monthly teaching plans. They need not be extensive, but list the unit topic or theme, the songs, the Bible stories, the possible art activities, and possible learning standards you intend to embed in those plans. We know that any written lesson plan will change, but displaying your possible plans tells parents your goals for the children.** | **2012** | **2013 - 2014** | This is being addressed and made a requirement for each classroom beginning the summer of 2013.  **2014 – Faculty display weekly lesson plans including environment enhancements. These grids include activities, themes, and learning objectives across the developmental domains (again aligned with objectives in the MN Early Indicators of Progress).** |
| **1B:**  **Mission and Ministry** | **Recommendation: Send home information about church events with the children at the center.** | **2011** | **2011** | The children and their families continue to receive regular communication regarding church events through the use of email, newsletters, flyers, and personal invitation. |
|  | **Recommendation: Continue to formalize and develop the intentionality between center and congregation.** | **On-going** | **On-going** | The school and church leaders meet regularly with each other and with staff to determine the best way to foster relationships between church and school. A family-oriented worship is being developed and is planned to debut in late 2012 or early 2013.  **2014 – Faith, Family, and Friends is the current family worship event model we are using. Parents are currently being surveyed regarding interest and needs for relationship building and parent ed, including opportunities specific to spiritual growth. The Rock is our weekly newsletter that goes out to all families regarding current events and invitations. The ECEC Admin staff and DCO regularly post signs, invitations in parent boxes, and electronic invitations. All ECEC faculty offer personal written and verbal invitations to ECEC families for the variety of church and school events.** |
|  | **Recommendation: Add the “Rock Solid Education” brochure and item 1B1 (The Mission of St. Peter’s) from the self study to the parent handbook.** | **2012** | **2012**  **2014** | A welcome packet has been developed and includes the handbook, brochures, and other invitational information for families to get involved.  2013 – New welcome materials and parent orientation process are being developed to have in place by fall 2013.  **2014 – Mission is included in parent handbook and handouts, as well as ECEC marketing brochures.** |
| **2A:**  **Home and Parent Relationships** | There is a very low percentage of families that actually become members of the congregation.(1,4)  **Recommendation: Create an intentional plan for ministering to families who do not have church homes. (1)** | **2013** | **2013** | 2012 – An informal process is being used, but a formal written “plan” is still being developed.  2013 – Our Vision 20/20 process has created written processes to intentionally reach unchurched and dechurched families.  **2014 – Continuing Vision 20/20 processes, now including efforts from DCO and ECEC Director/Assistant Director.** |
|  | There are not very many parent education classes offered.  **Recommendation: Depending on the length of the class (1 time only or multiple weeks), offer classes on various topics (ie discipline, sign language) throughout the year. Many different Christian based curriculums are available.** | **On-going** | **On-going** | 2012 – We have begun offering parent-education classes during Bible study time on Sunday mornings, but are planning to survey parents and find out what class offerings would be viewed as valuable and worthwhile to them.  2013 – Parents will be surveyed in the summer of 2013 to determine the time frame and content most applicable for future Parent Education classes.  **2014 – New survey is gathering info for ’14-’15 school year offerings. Financial Peace University class currently underway.** |
| **2B:**  **Congregational Relationships** | While trying to connect the congregation with the school families is described as a considerable concern, no specific effort is described to connect the unchurched students and their families. (1, 2, 4)  **Recommendation: The congregation should create an intentional outreach plan which assists in reaching the unchurched families at SPLECEC. (i.e. personal phone calls from key members, personal invitations to church events, a church family adopts a center family, etc.)** | **On-going** | **2013** | **See 2A1**  **2014 – Continued alignment with Vision 20/20, DCO and ECEC admin staff focus to invite. Pastor offers baptism classes and new member classes. DCO continuing efforts for direct connections. Open Houses have been held that brought together both ECEC and Elementary families.** |
|  | The congregation should make an effort to help families continue their child’s Christian education at St. Peter’s Lutheran School. (1, 2, 4)  **Recommendation(s): Offer tuition breaks for families that are members, have more social events to intentionally bring the school families and the center families together.** | **2012** | **2012**  **2014** | More school wide (ECEC and elementary) gatherings have been offered and have helped to bring together both parts of the school. A tuition break for families continuing onto Kindergarten has been in place for a few years now.  **2014 – Elementary school model is discontinued. Focus on retention in ECEC for continuum of infant through Pre-Kindergarten.** |
| **2C:**  **Elementary School to Early Childhood Center Relationship** | The school and center have only one administrator, who also serves as a teacher throughout the day.  **Recommendation: St. Peter’s Lutheran Early Childhood Education Center should budget for one administrative hour for every full time space / child enrolled. This will allow adequate time to manage the day-to-day operations of the center including supervision and observation of the teachers without having to fulfill elementary school administration responsibilities as well.** | **2012** | **2012**  **2014** | The administrator no longer has classroom duties and is able to do administration full-time. It is not financially viable at this time to hire an assistant director.  2013 – The addition of an Early Childhood Assistant to the School Administrator position in May of 2013 will allow the School Administrator to focus on higher-level needs of the school including development, funding, evaluations, etc.  **2014 – ECEC Currently has a full time ECEC Director and a full time ECEC Assistant Director. They are placed in classrooms intentionally for coaching and support purposes, to develop staff.** |
|  | Students attending the early childhood center have a low rate of matriculation when continuing their education into the elementary school program. (1, 2, 4)  **Recommendation: Create an intentional plan for promoting the school and encouraging center families to continue their child’s education at St. Peter’s Lutheran School.** | **2012** | **2012**  **2014** | A plan is being developed to help bridge the PreK-Kindergarten gap. This will be put in place for the 2012-2013 school year.  **2014 – Elementary school model is discontinued. Focus on retention in ECEC for continuum of infant through Pre-Kindergarten. Open Houses have brought together both ECEC and Elementary families.** |
| **3A:**  **Early Childhood Governing Authority** | It was difficult to fairly assess the completeness and accuracy of the information provided to the visiting team because the representation of the school board was limited in number and in experience. (3:19)  **Recommendation: Board members need to understand that visibility and leadership are critical components to a successful program. They need to be involved in important junctions including budgeting, accreditation processes, and other significant endeavors.** | **2011** | **On-going** | The school board understands the importance of their visibility in the congregation and school. As with many boards, the members are professional individuals with busy schedules and some were simply not available for the NLSA gathering at the time of the visit.  **2014 – The Board now includes an ECEC Champion that gives specific presence and support to the ECEC component.** |
| **3B:**  **Early Childhood Director** | The principal / director is filling two roles in the ministry at St. Peter’s Lutheran Church; that of school principal and that of director of the early education center. The director of the early childhood education center has enough responsibilities for more than one person without adding the responsibilities of an elementary principal. In addition, there is no one responsible when he is absent from the center. These conditions make it impossible for the director to regularly observe in the classrooms for extended periods of time to ensure that health and safety guidelines are adequately being followed.  R**ecommendation: Serious consideration should be given to separating the roles of the principal and the director. He cannot adequately serve one entity without negatively impacting the other under current circumstances.** | **On-going** | **On-going** | 2012 - The school administrator is no longer teaching in the school, but continues to administer both parts of the school. He works closely with the other administrative staff who offer support for certain portions of his responsibilities (i.e. Jean Mattei does scheduling)  At this time it is not financially viable to hire a second administrator.  2013 – The addition of an Early Childhood Assistant to the School Administrator position in May of 2013 will allow the School Administrator to focus on higher-level needs of the school including development, funding, evaluations, etc.  **2014 – ECEC Currently has a full time ECEC Director and a full time ECEC Assistant Director. They are placed in classrooms intentionally for coaching and support purposes, to develop staff.** |
|  | There is not a formal written evaluation in place for the director to use when evaluating staff members.  **Recommendation: Design a written evaluation to be used semi-annually with each staff member based on both performance and job descriptions.** | **2013** | **2014** | The School Administrator is developing a written evaluation plan to be used to evaluate teachers on a semi-annual basis beginning in 2012-2013. Work is being done to incorporate ministry involvement and overall dedication to ministry as a part of the evaluation process.  2013 – This plan should be in place for the fall of 2013 school year start.  **2014 – ECEC Faculty evaluations are conducted in 6 month and 12 month intervals, incorporating opportunity for both faculty self-evaluation and evaluation from the ECEC Director. Goal setting and equipping faculty are main objectives toward continually increasing quality across the ECEC.** |
| **4:**  **Personnel** | Teachers do not demonstrate knowledge of MN State Rule 3 which governs child care centers in the state of Minnesota. (2,3,4)  **Recommendation: Create a more thorough “New Staff Orientation” process which includes Rule 3 guidelines. This should then be reviewed annually with all staff as part of regular training.** | **2011** | **2011**  **2014** | A Rule 3 review was held after the visit and a more comprehensive orientation process has been developed. There are also regularly scheduled Rule 3 reviews during monthly staff meetings.  **2014 – ECEC Admin is well-versed in Rule 3 and this is monitored closely. Expectations for following regulations are included in new-hire orientation, regular faculty meetings, and evaluations.** |
|  | The expectations that are put on the principal / director to oversee the day-to-day operations of the center, while also being the principal and a teacher for the Lutheran day school, are too much. At a minimum, we believe the principal / director needs an assistant to help with observing staff in their daily jobs.  **Recommendation: Again, we strongly recommend one hour administrative time for every licensed child (i.e. if the center is licensed for 80 children then there should be a full time principal / director and a full time assistant principal / director. This would allow the principal / director to do the necessary observing in each classroom within the center.)** | **On-going** | **2013** | 2012 - The school administrator is no longer teaching in the school, but continues to administer both parts of the school. He works closely with the other administrative staff who offer support for certain portions of his responsibilities (i.e. Jean Mattei does scheduling)  At this time it is not financially viable to hire a second administrator.  2013 – The addition of an Early Childhood Assistant to the School Administrator position in May of 2013 will allow the School Administrator to focus on higher-level needs of the school including development, funding, evaluations, etc.  **2014 – ECEC Currently has a full time ECEC Director and a full time ECEC Assistant Director. They are placed in classrooms intentionally for coaching and support purposes, to develop staff.** |
|  | There is a lot of shuffling of staff and/or children from room to room in order for  MN State Rule 3 staffing requirements to be met correctly.  **Recommendation: Keeping in mind the best interest of the children, regularly review the staff schedule and provide more consistency and stability in the staffing of each classroom.** | **2012** | **2012** | The staff schedule has been adjusted to improve staff “manpower” during high movement/energy portions of the day. The shuffling of staff between elementary and ECEC has been eliminated.  **2014 – ECEC Faculty are scheduled for optimal continuum of caregiving and consistently of teaching throughout the day, including arrival and departure times.** |
|  | Some staff members are consistently working 10 hour days. This is especially exhausting in the child care field and is causing tension among various staff members (8 hour days versus 10 hour days). (1,2,3,4)  **Recommendation: Again, proactively review the staff schedule and provide a work schedule which is fair and equitable for each staff member. We also believe that soliciting input from the staff on ideas they have for the work day can remove barriers and improve relationships.** | **2011** | **2011**  **2014** | The teachers working 10 hour days are pleased with this scheduling layout. They are working longer days, but get an entire day of rest during the week. This reduces the stresses of finding time during a 5-day work week to perform personal tasks.  It has been determined that this works well for the infant and waddler classrooms, but would not lend itself well to the preschool/prek rooms where the teacher needs to be present each day to maintain consistency**.**  **2014 – We have extended the 4 10-hour day schedule option to the infant, waddler, and toddler/early pre teachers, at the faculty’s request. Preschool faculty still work 5 days for school-readiness consistency, but have been adjusted to ensure their classroom-contact time is more aligned with their fellow faculty members’.** |
| **5:**  **Teacher-Child Relations** | When teachers interact with the children, it is not at the child’s level. (3)  **Recommendation: Staff members need to get down to the children’s level more often and talk with them one on one.** | **2011** | **2011**  **2014** | The staff have been reminded to get down to the children’s level when interacting with them.  **2014 – Admin models this DAP frequently in classrooms; Admin has observed all faculty observing this best practice.** |
|  | The verbal interaction between teachers and infants was sparse. They were observed being on the floor with the children, but didn’t appear to be providing as many verbal queues with the children as they were with each other. (3)  **Recommendation: The infant staff could improve the area of language with the infants by talking to the babies more during regular routines.** | **2012** | **2012**  **2014** | The teachers sing with the children and are maintaining age-appropriate verbal interactions throughout the day.  **2014 – Admin models this DAP frequently in classrooms; Admin has observed all infant faculty observing this best practice, addressing our developmental domain focus of language/literacy. Both verbal language and sign language are used.** |
| **6:**  **Indoor/Outdoor Environment and Health and Safety** | The biggest area of concern at SPLECEC is that the lack of compliance with the Dept of Health and MN Rule 3 guidelines. In some cases, the staff members seemed to be aware of the rules, but were not adequately following them. In other cases, it was unclear if they were aware of the rules. (2, 3)  **Noted areas of concern:**   * 1. **Children not washing hands before eating, after diaper changes (including infants), and after being outdoors.**   2. **Staff members not thoroughly washing their hands after diaper changes.**   3. **Toys in the toddler room were not easily accessible to children because the lids on the buckets were difficult for the children to remove.**   4. **Most rooms did not have children’s art work at a child’s eye level. Some rooms had virtually no art work displayed at all.**   5. **Various staff members indicated that they did not know how often fire/tornado drills are done.**   6. **Children were sent into a classroom without a staff member being present. In one case, a child left the group and went into the bathroom; no staff noticed she was gone.**   7. **Aerosol Lysol cleaner, a risk to individuals with respiratory problems, was stored in toddler bathroom on a shelf, instead of being locked away properly.**   8. **Several volunteers serving lunch were not wearing required gloves.**   9. **When entering the infant carpet area, guests were not asked to cover shoes or remove shoes.**   10. **Glass juice bottle was setting on a shelf in the classroom. This is a safety concern if it were to fall on the floor.**   11. **An Infant was allowed to sleep in the swing during nap time.** | **2011** | **2011**  **2014** | The staff were immediately given a “Rule 3 review” and a discussion about how these rules are indeed rules and not suggestions. The School Administrator continues to spend time in each room to ensure every room is compliant with DHS regulations at all times.  The noted areas of concern were addressed immediately.    **2014 – DHS licensing compliance visit will be Fall of 2014; consistently monitoring Rule 3 compliance including both classroom practices and center documentation. Working specifically on increasing visual art displays by infants and waddlers. Fire and tornado drills are done monthly (and logged appropriately) in compliance with Rule 3.** |
|  | Staff did not have proper orientation and/or annual review of Rule 3 guidelines. (2, 3)  **Recommendations: The director should provide an all-staff re-orientation training to MN Department of Human Services Rule 3 prior to July 15, 2011. The process should be scheduled as part of a regular annual training.** | **2011** | **On-going** | A Rule 3 review was held after the visit and a more comprehensive orientation process has been developed. There are also regularly scheduled Rule 3 reviews during monthly staff meetings.  2013 - A revised initial orientation process and regularly scheduled review process will be completed in summer of 2013 |
|  | **Recommendation: Staff should use *Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale: Revised Edition* which is published by Teachers College Press and is available through NAEYC. This resource gives a complete picture of what a high-quality early childhood program can look like. There is a rating scale written for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, curriculum, and administration. This rating system looks at all areas of a program; indoor/outdoor space and furnishings, personal care, interaction, activities program structure and relationships.** | **2013** | **2013**  **2014** | There is a plan to order the suggested book and use it to self-evaluate the ECEC.  2013 – Texts have been ordered and are being reviewed.  **2014 – ECEC Director is currently using ITERS and ECERS checklists for continuous assessments.** |
| **7:**  **Curriculum** | **Recommendations: We recommend continued work on the center-wide curriculum. Included are the following suggestions:**  **(1) adoptions of center-wide learning goals/standards that are aligned from age group to age group;**  **(2) a shorter list of Bible stories that are developmentally appropriate and can be repeated from year to year with different emphasis ensuring that the children will have a strong understanding of main lessons and people in the Bible;**  **(3) a strong connection between the Bible story for the year or month and the themes (e.g.: Theme: Special Valentines & Bible story: David & Jonathan) to ensure**  **the children see the connection from the Biblical themes to the themes of the month;**  **(4) a play-based assessment plan connected to the center wide learning goals/standards, that can be implemented during children’s play.** | **2013-2015** | **On-going** | The School Administrator understand the importance of this recommendation and plans to work with Lynn Gehrke of Concordia University to help assist in this process.  **2014 – St. Peter’s ECEC’s Guiding Principles for Curriculum Design are reflected in the posted age-appropriate curriculum grids and info in each classroom. We will continue to work on enhancing the concept of continuum of curriculum in our Classroom Lead Faculty meetings, while celebrating, encouraging, and incorporating individual faculty member’s gifts and teaching styles.** |
|  | **Recommendations: Since it is not possible to see all activities and interactions during a two day visit, there are a couple recommendations related to play and discovery that can be used for further development and discussion by the teaching staff. We recommend continuing the large amounts of exploration and play time. One consideration for the center staff is to make sure there is equipment and material available in the classroom to ensure the ability to address all learning goals/standards during play time (e.g.: creative dramatics – have a well developed home living area; creative art – have a well developed and available art center for all children to use).** | **2012** |  | The mentioned areas are available in each classroom and are used on a daily basis. Freeplay is a large part of each classroom and materials and toys are rotated on a daily or weekly basis. Having a specific set of learner outcomes will reaching our full potential I regards to offering everything the child needs in each area.  2013 – While the areas mentioned are available, we will be working this summer to more strongly develop those areas and the intentionality of their use.  **2014 – Continuing development of learning center and environment enhancement in toddler/early preschool classrooms, to align with our curriculum framework addressing all indicators and domains. This development includes visits to other programs, classroom coaching and modeling by admin, and guided in-service.** |
|  | **Recommendations: Once the center-wide goals/standards, sample themes & Bible stories, and assessment plan have been developed, we recommend that those documents and the statements about alignment between age levels be written up as the center curriculum plan (and philosophy) and be distributed to each family currently enrolled, and going forward to new families as they enroll (part of an enrollment packet).** | **2014** | **2014** | The School Administrator understand the importance of this recommendation and plans to work with Lynn Gehrke of Concordia University to help assist in this process.  **2014 – St. Peter’s ECEC’s Guiding Principles for Curriculum Design are available to parents as they request. They are reflected in the posted age-appropriate curriculum grids and info in each classroom.** |
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**TO ADD LINES TO THE TABLE FOR MORE CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, PUT THE CURSOR IN THE LAST (BOTTOM RIGHT) BOX AND CLICK “TAB.”**