



NLSA Diagnostic

Mayer Lutheran High School

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Vision and Purpose.....	2
Governance.....	3
Christian Faith.....	4
Fiscal Responsibility.....	5
Lutheran Identity.....	6
Facilities.....	7
Congregation.....	8
Report Summary.....	9

Introduction

This diagnostic serves as a companion document to the AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools and provides additional distinctive cultural content that will be used as part of the evaluation process for NLSA accreditation. Through this self-assessment process, schools are guided through an in-depth internal evaluation of all areas of operations and programs, and provided an opportunity to develop the accountability and discipline required by quality Christian educational systems.

The **Lutheran Diagnostic** can be rated using the following scale from the NLSA EBA Self-Study Report:

The assignment of a rating is determined by the evidence and the practices that support the rating using the corresponding point value. A written response is required for every indicator in the “Response” section.

Highly Functional (4) — This is an area of outstanding strength of the school. Supported by extensive documentation and/or observable practices that exceed expectations related to the indicator. This indicator establishes practices for other Lutheran schools to consider.

Operational (3) — This is the expected rating for a strong Lutheran school. The condition is supported with documentation and/or observable practices that support the rating.

Emerging (2) — Improvement is required in this area. This indicator is recognized as important by the school, but is inconsistently applied.

Not Evident (1) — There is observable conflict or deficiency with this indicator at the school. Sufficient practices, evidence or documentation is lacking.

Vision and Purpose

The school enacts and aligns its vision and purpose to assure the fulfillment of the unique Lutheran cultural identity.

Statement or Question

How does the school demonstrate its unique Lutheran identity through its alignment of vision, purpose and action?

Response

The schools mission statement is well-known by faculty, staff, students, families and community. It appears on letterhead, memos, agendas, programs, and other places. The mission, vision and core values are discussed in meetings in order to affirm that there is agreement with these statements and to use them to shape the direction of the school's ministry. Mission statement and the core values are displayed in classrooms. The schools mission statement meaning has been clarified and this clarification is displayed on posters and window murals. Chapel services present Law and Gospel and often include litanies and confessions of faith that are from the LSB and/or Luther's Small Catechism. Theology classes have their foundation in Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions and provides students with different course options that allow them to grow in knowledge, faith, and in their ability to defend and explain their faith.

Evidence

Memos, Agenda, Mission posters, Core values posters, Faculty and Parent/Student Handbooks, Syllabi, Academic Guide, Advent Devotion Books

Rating: 4

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Comments/Recommendations:

Governance

The school's governance board and administration ensure the implementation of its unique Lutheran identity.

Statement or Question

How do the members of the governing board demonstrate an understanding of the Lutheran doctrine and its application to Lutheran education?

Response

At each meeting, the school's Mission, Vision, and Essential values are shared at the top of the Board agenda. Each new Board member receives a thorough orientation before they begin their term on the Board. All but one of the Board members must be a member of an Association, LCMS congregation. Two of the positions on the board are filled by an LCMS pastor and the other by a called LCMS church worker. The annual Board Advance (We do not retreat!) takes place each January on a Saturday. The purpose of the event is to provide a time to grow spiritually through Bible study led by an LCMS pastor, grow in their expertise in Board governance, and grow closer personally as we provide team-building activities. The Board has updated our strategic plan and it will be formally adopted in the fall of 2019.

Evidence

1. Board agendas 2. New Board member orientation packet 3. School By-laws 4. Board Advance agenda 5. Board minutes 6. 2019 Strategic Plan 7. Board Roster

Rating: 3

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Comments/Recommendations:

Statement or Question

How does the administrator ensure the unique Lutheran culture is evident among the school's staff?

Response

The administrator leads the faculty through activities that emphasize the schools mission and core values. One example of this impact is with respect to Koinonia, in which the faculty made adjustments to the program to make the time be focused on a combination of scripture, prayer, and devotions. Another example is the work that has been done to enhance the culture of Mayer Lutheran starting with the faculty. A guiding statement was adopted at the conclusion of the 2018-19 school year. The statement is: "Mayer Lutheran is a place where we aspire to live out the Fruits of the Spirit daily.

This allows us to love one another as Christ loves us, and when we fail, we seek forgiveness." It is based on Galatians 5:22-23. School culture is a standing topic on meeting agendas and the opportunity is given to share aspects of culture that are going well as well as discussing areas to work on. The faculty gathers once a month for 'First Things First' Bible study. Each day begins with devotions and faculty are strongly encouraged to attend.

The administrators are rostered, called, Commissioned Minister of the LCMS. They attend and provides leadership in various LCMS continuing education opportunities including the Association of Lutheran Secondary School conferences, district-wide learning opportunities including the District teacher's convention, and regional LCMS meetings within our District. Administrators regularly shares articles with the community in our newsletter and speaking engagements espousing the benefits of a uniquely Lutheran approach to teaching and learning. The Executive Director serves the Association churches in a variety of ways from teaching catechesis to leading Bible studies among the congregations and their various auxiliaries.

Evidence

1. Copy of Newsletters 2. Conference attendance verification forms indicating continuing education credits etc. 3. Agendas for faculty and Board meetings and School Leadership Team meetings. 4. Minutes of faculty and Board meetings 5. Samples of administrator calendar showing various speaking and teaching activities. 5. Sample FTF Bible Study, Morning devotion schedule

Rating: 3

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Comments/Recommendations:

Christian Faith

The Christian faith is intentionally integrated in daily lessons throughout the curriculum.

Statement or Question

How does the school plan for intentional faith integration in daily lessons throughout the curriculum and when other opportunities occur?

Response

Students are required to earn four credits (years) in theology in order to graduate. Students who attend Mayer Lutheran for four years will take a year of Old Testament, a year of New Testament, and will choose from Defending the Faith, Christian Ethics, Comparative Religions, Articles of Faith, History of Christianity, Christian Worship, or Christian Leadership in order to fulfill their requirements. Chapels, Festival Services, and Koinonia all provide opportunities for students to be encouraged in their walk with Christ. Teachers regularly pray with students, share devotions with students, and build relationships with them in order to be able to speak to them about faith and God's love for them in Christ. Teachers actively look for faith integration opportunities that fit into the curriculum in authentic ways and utilize these opportunities so that students learn to recognize evidence of God's action in the past as well as the present. Students have the opportunity to participate in an annual mission trip to Anapra, Mexico. The mission trip also involves teachers, parents, and community members. Co-curricular activities also have an emphasis on prayer and devotional time as an integral part of what occurs.

Evidence

Syllabi, Agenda re: Chapel or Koinonia, Koinonia prayer journals, Students create devotions (Advent Devos), Creation moments in Biology

Rating: 4

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Comments/Recommendations:

Fiscal Responsibility

Monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system.

Statement or Question

How does the school ensure that a regularly audited accounting system is used?

Response

We conduct an annual audit using the GAP standards for both the high school and the Lutheran High School in Mayer Foundation. The Business Office provides regular, monthly financial reports and share the information with the Board of Directors, School Leadership Team, and appropriate staff members.

Evidence

1. Annual audit report for Mayer Lutheran High School and the Lutheran High School in Mayer Foundation 2. Sample of monthly financial report shared with Board and School Leadership Team 3. The minutes of the Board of Directors of both the high school and the Foundation indicating their approval of the auditor's report

Rating: 4

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Comments/Recommendations:

Lutheran Identity

Teachers ensure the implementation of the school's unique Lutheran identity.

Statement or Question

How do the teachers ensure the implementation of the school's unique Lutheran identity?

Response

This occurs through the work done on a daily basis to carry out the educational ministry of Mayer Lutheran High School. Teachers engage with students through devotions and prayer. Teachers are reminded regularly about the importance of putting our mission, to prepare Christian Leaders, at the forefront of what we do. This means that we are daily challenged to share Christ in word and through actions. Faithful Christians, the majority LCMS Lutherans, take their responsibilities as Christian educators very seriously. The core doctrinal beliefs of the LCMS are discussed with teachers who are not LCMS trained. This is an open dialogue that works well in order to ensure the students receive information that is consistent with scripture and Lutheran doctrine. Teachers participate in a monthly Bible study program that allows them to grow in knowledge and in understanding of its application as an educator in a Lutheran school.

Evidence

Handbooks, LTD, FTF Bible Study booklet, Syllabi, Chapel Powerpoints, Chapel Speakers List

Rating: 3

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Comments/Recommendations:

Facilities

The school facilities reflect Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Statement or Question

How is the lordship of Christ displayed throughout the school?

Response

Classrooms contain pictures, artwork, and posters that encourage and remind students of their relationship to Christ. The commons areas have wall art that reminds students to live as Christian leaders, which refers to their personal response to Christ's sacrifice and love for them. The competition gym has scripture references that point to Christ. The Fine Arts Center has banners that point to Christ and our Lutheran heritage. The Fine Arts Center lobby has a banner, a cross, and a stained glass window in it. The murals outside the art room point to Christ and our Lutheran heritage.

Though imperfect because of our sinful nature, the Lordship of Christ is evident in the relational ministry that takes places each day. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is boldly proclaimed in the context of the curriculum, the climate of the classroom, and in the culture of the school.

Evidence

Parker Grahn Photo collage (images from around the school)

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Comments/Recommendations:

Congregation

The congregation provides support and encouragement for the ministry of the school.

Statement or Question

How does the congregation strongly support the school ministry?

Response

The twelve supporting congregations of the Lutheran High School in Mayer Association provides annual support in excess of 10% of the school's annual operating budget. The members of the Board of Directors are chosen from the Association churches. The churches regularly and reliably promote the ministry of Mayer Lutheran High School among their families and other stakeholders. Pastors regularly lead chapels and Bible studies for students and staff. Pastors regularly meet with the school administrators and have established a spirit of partnership and collegiality among the congregational leaders and the leaders of Mayer Lutheran High School.

Evidence

1. Copies of the approved annual operating budget for Mayer Lutheran High School 2. Minutes of Delegates meetings showing approval of new and renewing Board members 3. Samples of bulletins and newsletters sharing news about Mayer Lutheran High School 4. Interviews with pastors and lay leaders in the churches 5. Copy of the school By-laws showing relationship of congregations and the high school

Rating: 3

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Comments/Recommendations:

Report Summary