

POLICY MANUAL



National Lutheran School Accreditation Mission Statement

NLSA encourages and recognizes schools that provide quality Christian education and engage in continuous improvement.

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NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

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NOTE: A Glossary of Terms used in this Policy Manual is a separate file on the CD.

NLSA POLICY MANUAL

National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) Mission, Purpose and Vision Statements

Mission Statement:

NLSA encourages and recognizes schools that provide quality, Christian education and engage in continuous improvement.

Purpose Statements:

The purposes of NLSA are to:

- Help Lutheran schools, early childhood, elementary, and secondary, and childcare centers to improve.
- Help all Lutheran schools and centers to evaluate themselves based on their unique purposes.
- Assure a level of quality for accredited Lutheran schools based on national standards.
- Give appropriate recognition to those schools that complete the process successfully.

Vision Statement:

The Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, “Go and make disciples,” includes ministering to children. He also encourages, “Let the children come to Me.” Lutheran schools and childcare centers serve children and families by providing God-pleasing, quality learning experiences, adult-child relationships, and nurturing environments.

National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) provides a service that empowers our early childhood centers and early childhood, elementary, and secondary schools to develop and improve high-quality, Christ-centered education through a voluntary process which helps them to:

- Analyze themselves based upon rigorous national standards.
- Identify those areas that need improvement.
- Establish a plan to systematically improve the identified areas.
- Implement the improvement plan.
- Continue an ongoing evaluation of their mission and ministry.

I. Schools Eligible for National Lutheran School Accreditation

- A. National accreditation is completely voluntary. No school is required to achieve it. NLSA does not imply or determine recognition by Synod. It does not condone discrimination or prejudice against those schools and districts that choose not to be involved, but it encourages all schools to participate. The schools and early childhood centers that are recognized by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod are encouraged to apply. The duration of an accreditation cycle is five years. Early childhood, elementary, secondary and any combination of these levels are eligible. All levels and sizes of schools have equal opportunity to become accredited
- B. Schools may be accredited by NLSA in two ways:
 - 1. by initially completing the NLSA Standards Based process, then for re-accreditation either the Standards Based process or the Ongoing Improvement process.
 - 2. by completing the “Guide for Evaluating the Christian Mission of Lutheran Schools” as a supplement to a regional or NAEYC process.
- C. Schools and childcare centers must be in operation with students before applying for NLSA accreditation.
- D. A school serving a variety of levels may be accredited either as one unified school or separately, as an early childhood center, elementary school or as a high school, as decided by the District Accreditation Committee. Early childhood centers operated by a congregation(s) that also operates schools with grades may become an integral part of the school’s singular accreditation process. But vibrant early childhood centers operating alongside of an elementary school may choose to evaluate themselves separately, using NLSA’s early childhood accreditation process. When this occurs only one fee will be charged to the school(s).

II. Application Process

A. NLSA Online Application Process

This process is available exclusively for schools for their “initial” first-time application.

Your school must be a member of the Lutheran School Portal in order to process a NLSA application online. If your school is not currently a Portal subscriber, you should contact the office in St. Louis, Mo. The person creating the application must be a “School Portal Administrator.”

Step 1: Go to <http://www.lsportal.net>

Step 2: Log in using your username and password.

Step 3: Hover your mouse over the “Admin1” tab and click on the “NLSA Application” link in the drop down menu.

Step 4: Complete all sections of the application form. Note: You can “save” a work in process form and come back later to complete it. When you are ready to submit the final form, check the checkbox next to “Check this box if you’re ready to submit this form to your district office.” Then click on the “Submit to District Office” button.

Step 5: Follow the instructions on the next page regarding printing copies of the application form and sending it to your district office.

B. Reapplication Process

1. The school administrator expresses initial interest to the District Education Executive or to the NLSA office (1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122, 1-800-248-1930, ext. 1294).
2. The District Executive or the NLSA office will send initial information and an application.
3. The school leaders review the initial information. To apply, the school administrator will complete three copies of the application and send them, along with the non-refundable application fee, to their District Education Executive for signature. Additional district accreditation fees and forms may be required.
4. The District Executive will sign the application forms, keep one copy, send two copies to the NLSA office with the school's application fee, and suggest a consultant for the school.
5. Upon receipt of the application and fee NLSA will send materials that enable the school to complete the NLSA process, and the NLSA Director will appoint a trained consultant for the school. The application and fee must be received by the NLSA office at least nine months **before** the site visit begins. The site visit must begin within three years from the date the application is received or the school must re-apply and pay a new fee.

III. Requirements for Accreditation

- A. There are five basic NLSA accreditation processes:
 - 1. **Standards Based** – The first process a school uses.
 - 2. **Ongoing Improvement** – An option for re-accreditation.
 - 3. **Early Childhood Process** – Designed specifically for LCMS early childhood centers connected with schools or operating independently.
 - 4. **High School Process** – Featuring National Standards designed specifically for Lutheran high schools.
 - 5. **Guide for Evaluating the Christian Mission** — A supplement to be added when using a secular accreditation process and desiring dual accreditation.

- B. NLSA has developed National Standards that are required for accredited Lutheran schools. Standards are used to evaluate the school in relation to its unique mission and vision. Compliance with Required Standards is evaluated through the completion of Indicators of Success identified in the self-study document. A school can determine if it is eligible for accreditation by examining its compliance with the indicators of success using the rating scale that applies. Schools that do not measure up to the level of compliance with Required Standards may work toward improving the quality of their school before inviting the visiting team to evaluate its program. Close communication with the school’s accreditation consultant will ensure the school’s success in the accreditation process.

- C. Before any application is forwarded to the NLSA national office, it must be signed by the District Education Executive, who indicates on the application the district's recommendation regarding which process the school should follow for accreditation.

IV. Reports Required

The schools are required to complete two reports:

A. Self-Study Report

1. For the Standards Based and Early Childhood processes this report is an extensive and thorough year-long evaluation of every aspect of the school, based on the school's philosophy and the national standards. For the Ongoing Improvement process, this evaluation is briefer, but a thorough School Improvement Plan must be developed and followed by the school.
2. Schools that wish to obtain multiple accreditations with one report have two options. They follow the details of the agreement between NLSA and the other agency, usually using the NLSA process and materials or they use another recognized agency's report form, but must complete the NLSA "Guide for Evaluating the Christian Mission" supplement and have one or more visiting team members appointed by NLSA.
 - a. The NLSA may be coupled with a similar process for LCMS district, state, or regional accrediting agencies. One self-study report and visit could result in accreditation by several agencies. Since program requirements vary, each district, state or school may need to negotiate cooperative arrangements with the accrediting programs most important to them.
 - b. In states where state accreditation or recognition is required, it is expected that schools applying for NLSA will have achieved, or be in the process of achieving, that accreditation.

B. Cumulative Annual Report

The Cumulative Annual Report briefly indicates the school's progress toward further self-improvement, based on recommendations made by the NLSA visiting team (SB) and the school's School Improvement Plan (OI). The school must consider every recommendation made by the visiting team during the five-year period of accreditation. The school's actions are then reported in the Cumulative Annual Report. This report must be submitted to the appropriate district office each year before May 15 in order for the school to retain its accreditation status. Failure to submit a cumulative annual report is grounds for revocation of accreditation.

V. Required Accreditation Fees

Schools accredited by NLSA are required to pay a single fee every year. The fee is established by the National Accreditation Commission at its annual meeting.

There are two types of required accreditation fees:

Application Fees: Schools completing an application for accreditation or reaccreditation must submit the required fee along with their application. If a school submits an application fee, it does not have to pay an additional annual fee in the year of its application. (Schools are required to pay a single fee every year.)

Annual Fees: This fee is to be submitted to the NLSA office before Oct. 1 of each year. An annual fee is not charged during the year a school has paid its application fee. (Schools are required to pay a single fee every year.) The NLSA office in St. Louis generates an invoice to accredited schools for their annual fees.

Districts may establish and assess a separate accreditation fee for their schools.

Preschools associated with elementary schools are given a choice of independently using the Early Childhood Accreditation Process or working together with their elementary school as a part of their integrated standards based or OI process. Fees will be charged as one school.

Failure to pay fees results in the revocation of a schools' accreditation status.

VI. Term of Accreditation

A. The term of accreditation is for five years, from Sept. 1 when the school was first accredited to the end of August of the fifth year. Schools are encouraged to re-apply by the fourth year of the accreditation process so they maintain continuous accreditation.

B. Extensions

Schools facing extreme extenuating circumstances may request extensions for their NLSA application period or term of accreditation.

1. Requests for extension must be presented in writing to the District Education Executive and include a complete description of the extreme extenuating circumstances that result in the request.
2. Written requests must be endorsed in writing by the District Education Executive or District Accreditation Commissioner and submitted to the NLSA Director. The NLSA Executive Committee will consider all extension requests and its decision is final.

VII. Levels of Accreditation

Definitions

The National Accreditation Commission has sole authority to accredit schools or revoke a school's accreditation status. All NLSA accredited schools maintain an active status of accreditation for the term that is prescribed by NLSA policy. A school may be assigned with an additional status, for a period of time, depending on its qualifications; the determination and recommendations made by the visiting team and/or district accreditation commission; and assignment by the national accreditation commission.

The Levels of NLSA Accreditation

Accredited in Good Standing: An accredited school in good standing demonstrates compliance with required standards and indicators of success and is committed to continuing school improvement.

Exemplary Accredited: An Exemplary Accredited school exceeds compliance with NLSA standards, demonstrates leadership through innovative vision and is dedicated to sharing best practices within the educational community and other Lutheran schools.

Provisional Accreditation: A provisionally accredited school fails to comply with required standards or indicators of success and/or has been cited with major deficiencies by the visiting team.

Recommending Provisional Accreditation

Accredited schools must comply with all required NLSA standards and indicators of success. When a visiting team validates that a school has failed to comply with a specific required standard or indicator of success, the national accreditation commission will consider the assignment of provisional status. In addition, if the visiting team identifies significant major deficiencies, it may recommend the assignment of provisional status with a set time frame to resolve the deficiency.

The visiting team may request consideration of the assignment of provisional accreditation in its visiting team report summary as part of its accreditation recommendation. The request should include the team's justifications for the recommendation, specific recommendations for remediation, and a suggested time frame for resolution.

Provisionally accredited schools must take corrective action identified by the National Accreditation Commission within the prescribed time frame or risk the revocation of their accreditation status.

Recommending Exemplary Accreditation

When a visiting team verifies that a school exceeds compliance with NLSA standards, demonstrates leadership through innovative vision and conducts specific best practices, it may nominate the school for Exemplary Accreditation. In order to be considered, the team must verify that the school fully complies with all required standards and indicators of

success. In addition, the team must also confirm that the school “Meets in Full” 90 percent or more of the general indicators of success.

The visiting team may request consideration of the assignment of exemplary accreditation in its visiting team report summary as a part of its accreditation recommendation. The team must share its rationale for the recommendation and illustrate specific best practices observed during the visit. Schools nominated for exemplary status will be required to provide additional documentation in order to be considered for the award.

“Accredited School—Exemplary Status” is awarded by the National Accreditation Commission to the school for a single year in the year following its accreditation or re-accreditation.

Lutheran schools of all types (early childhood, elementary and high school) are eligible to be nominated for a designated level of accreditation. Ultimately, the National Accreditation Commission maintains full authority to assign or revoke any special level of accreditation for its schools.

VIII. Certificate of Accreditation

The District Education Executive or a representative of the District Commission will present the certificate at a significant public event of the congregation or school. Should the setting of the school have a multiple campus site or different locations for ministry, a duplicate certificate may be requested.

IX. Revocation of Accreditation

A. Violations that may lead to revocation:

1. Fees not paid within two months of the due date.
2. Annual reports not submitted within two months of the due date.
3. No evidence of continued improvement based on review of the visiting team report recommendations (SB) or the School Improvement Plan (OI).
4. Major deficiencies noted by the visiting team or district that have not been remedied within the time parameters set by the visiting team.
5. Major deficiencies realized since the site visit.

B. When an NLSA accredited school is closed, accreditation is forfeited. To become re-accredited, the school must re-apply and successfully complete the process if it re-opens.

C. Action to be taken:

1. Revocation will be done automatically by the NLSA director for violations (1) and (2) listed above after one warning given two months after the due date.
2. Action on violations (3), (4), and (5) will be taken by the NLSA National Accreditation Commission (NAC) at its annual meeting in August. These actions may be taken as a result of a recommendation by a District Accreditation Commission, although district recommendation is not required prior to action by the National Accreditation Commission.

X. Disclaimer of Responsibility

Accreditation by National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) indicates that the school successfully completed the NLSA process of self-study, reporting, and evaluation by a visiting team, and that the visiting team recommended NLSA accreditation as a result of that visit. The District Accreditation Commission has concurred with the team's recommendation. Upon review by the membership committee, the National Accreditation Commission makes final recommendation. It is determined, through this process, that the school is worthy of NLSA accreditation. Neither NLSA nor its authorizing agency, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, assumes responsibility for the school's quality (or lack thereof) or for variations from NLSA standards either at the time of initial accreditation or at any time during NLSA accreditation.

XI. NLSA Consultants

As part of the application process, the NLSA Director will appoint a trained consultant to help the school in its self-study process and preparation for the visiting team.

- A. The school consultant's job is finished in the Standards Based and Early Childhood processes when the school's self-study report is complete and acceptable, the visiting team has been appointed, and the site visit has been scheduled. The Standards Based and Early Childhood consultant does not serve in any capacity on the visiting team.
- B. The school consultant of an Ongoing Improvement process does serve on the visiting team as a member, but not as the team captain.

Job Description in Appendix A

XII. Visiting Team

A. Purpose

Upon completion of the self-study process, a team of educators will visit the school to validate the school's self-study report and to make recommendations for the improvement of the school and the School Improvement Plan (if OI).

B. Team Members

The minimum number of visiting team members for any Standards Based visit is three. To save expenses, team members within commuting distance of the school ordinarily will be appointed. Team members will be requested and enlisted by the school administrator, recommended by the District Accreditation Commission or by the District Education Executive if there is no commission, and appointed by the NLSA Director. All team members must be appointed by the NLSA Director at least four weeks before the site visit or the visit is to be delayed.

1. Standards Based Team members for the standards process will be selected from the following types:

- a. The captain will be selected from the list of trained captains, approved by the District Accreditation Commission.
- b. A teacher or administrator from a non-LCMS Christian school.
- c. A teacher or administrator from another LCMS school.
- d. A public school teacher or administrator. (This person may be an LCMS congregation member.)
- e. An LCMS pastor from another congregation with a school.
- f. A specialist, college professor, or staff person from a district or national LCMS office.

The following minimum number of site visitors will be required, chosen from the suggested members listed above, according to the size of the school to be visited. Additional team members from any type of members may be selected in addition to these minimal requirements.

<u>STUDENTS</u>	<u>MINIMUM TEAM</u>	<u>SUGGESTED MEMBER TYPES</u>
1-150	4	A, B, C, D
151-250	5	A, B, C, C, D
251-350	6	A, B, C, C, D, E,
351 or more	7	A, B, C, C, D, E, F

- 2. Early Childhood Team Members**—The early childhood initial team will include a minimum of three members who will conduct a visit over two days. The three team members are:
- a. The Trained Team Captain (selected from the approved district list of trained Early Childhood Team Captains).
 - b. An early childhood educator from another LCMS ECC. It is suggested that at least one teacher from an LCMS ECC which is not accredited be recommended and appointed to each visiting team.
 - c. An early childhood educator selected by the ECC with specific expertise in areas of concern identified in the school’s self-study report. This person need not have experience with NLSA.
 - d. The consultant for this process will not serve on the visiting team.

All three members of the Visiting Team will be selected and recruited by the local school, approved by the District Accreditation Commission, and appointed by the Executive Director of NLSA.

Careful attention should be given to the selection of visiting team members in order to have competency and balance. Members of the visiting team should know the characteristics of a good school program and represent the level of the school being visited. The school administrator should send official letters of appointment to all visiting team members after appointment by the NLSA Director.

When a Lutheran ECC seeks accreditation by NAEYC or another secular agency and NLSA, the center/school will be required to complete the NLSA “Guide for Evaluating the Christian Mission” as part of its self study report. The NLSA Director must appoint one member of the visiting team.

- 3. The Ongoing Improvement Process Team** shall consist of the team captain, the school consultant, and a resource person selected by the school.

C. Visiting Team Captain

Visiting Team Captains are requested by the school, recommended by the district and appointed by the NLSA Director. Captains receive required training that has been endorsed and approved by the NLSA Director. A complete list of NLSA Trained Team Captains is located on the Lutheran School Portal. The NAC Executive Committee may make exceptions to this policy.

Job Description Appendix A

D. Pastor Meeting

At least two team members should interview the pastor(s) for informational purposes and to let him (them) know that he (they) have an important role in regard to the school and to make him (them) aware of the nature, extent and value of the accreditation process.

E. Site Visit

The site visit for the Standards Based process shall last for no less than two full school days. (Two full days and a half day, culminating with a brief exit report, is a typical visit.) The site visit for the Ongoing Improvement process shall last for at least one full day, but a typical visit shall last one and a half days. The site visit for an Early Childhood process shall last for two days.

1. Site visits are to be made no earlier than nine months nor later than three years from the date of the paid application.
2. Any school not having a site visit within the three-year limit will no longer be considered an applicant and will be informed of removal from schools “in process.”
3. The nine-month period between application and site visit may be waived at the discretion of the NLSA Director upon the request of the District Accreditation Commission. Where no District Accreditation Commission exists, the school may appeal directly to the NLSA Director.
4. No site visit shall begin later than three weeks before the end of that school’s school year.

F. Exit Report

The team captain conducts the exit interview at which all team members are expected to be present. The team’s recommendation related to accreditation is to be presented during the exit report.

G. Self-Study Report Review

The visiting team must receive the self-study report one month before the visit and review it to determine if a visit is appropriate. The team captain should delay the visit if each team member does not receive the report one full month before the scheduled visit. A copy of this report is sent to the district office and one to the national NLSA office.

H. Visiting Team Report

1. Content

- a. For the Standards Based and Early Childhood processes, the visiting team will report the school's compliance with required standards and indicators of success, observed strengths, concerns, and recommendations for each of the sections of the self-study report. A school's compliance with required standards will be reviewed in light of the local school's philosophy. For the Ongoing Improvement process the team will review the standards checklist and the School Improvement Plan, and make appropriate recommendations.
- b. Recommendation for Accreditation. The visiting team is responsible for a recommendation as part of its report. The district accreditation commission will recommend specific action related to the school accreditation status to the National Accreditation Commission. The National Accreditation Commission will make the final decision at its annual August meeting.
- c. A major deficiency is any condition, based on an NLSA standard, which has a severe, negative effect on the quality of education, the ministry of the school, and/or endangers the health and safety of the school population. The school must remedy the deficiency within the time parameters (no longer than two years) prescribed by the team. Many schools will have no major deficiencies.

2. Report Format

- a. The summary page of the report, which includes the team's recommendation for accreditation, should be at the end, not the beginning, of the team report.
- b. The Visiting Team Report must be paginated.
- c. The "General Information" section (School Profile) of the Self-Study Report prepared by the school is a required part of all copies of the Visiting Team Reports.
- d. The Visiting Team (for the Standards Based process) may choose not to write an overview for each curriculum section of the Self-Study Report. An overview shall be written for the general curriculum section.
- e. Alternate Format. The decision to allow an alternate format for Standards Based team reports was reaffirmed. Teams using the alternate format should include within the wording of each recommendation the concern that prompted the recommendation.
- f. Every concern, and therefore, recommendation, should numerically refer to the standard(s) to which it relates.
- g. Every report shall include an NLSA Team Report Submission Checklist that is

prepared by the Team Captain to assure compliance with submission requirements.

3. Distribution of Visiting Team Report

A final copy of the team report will be distributed by the school to each member of the visiting team, and the number of reports required by the district to the district office, and to the District Accreditation Commissioner. The District Accreditation Commission will forward two copies to the NLSA office along with its recommendations by June 15.

4. Appeal Process

- a. The school may make a written appeal of the recommendation of the visiting team to the District Accreditation Commission (DAC).
- b. Should the appeal fail, the school may appeal the DAC ruling to the chairperson of the National Accreditation Commission. The National Accreditation Commission's decision is final.

5. Review Process

School applications for accreditation will be reviewed following three steps:

Step One: The Visiting Team makes a recommendation based upon its observations and interviews at the school in its final report.

Step Two: The District Accreditation Commission (DAC) reviews the recommendation of the visiting team and makes a second recommendation based upon its specific knowledge of the school and its programs.

Step Three: The NAC Membership Committee reviews every school application using the following process:

- a. Thoroughly read, mark and inwardly digest each assigned visiting team report.
- b. Fill out an NLSA reviewer's form for each school based on what has been read.
- c. Share findings with the Membership Committee as a whole.
- d. Recommend accreditation or denial of accreditation for all candidate schools to the NAC based upon recommendations of:
 - 1) The Visiting Team
 - 2) The District Accreditation Commission
 - 3) Their own thorough review of the school's application and visiting team report.

I. Evaluation of Consultant and Team Captain

1. A form for the evaluation of the consultant's help is to be completed by the school administrator and submitted to the District Education Executive.
2. A form for the evaluation of the Visiting Team Captain is to be completed by both the school administrator and members of the Visiting Team and sent to the District Education Executive.
3. Forms used to evaluate consultants and team captains are available on the NLSA CD.

XIII. National Accreditation Commission (NAC)

A. Policies

All NLSA policies remain continuously in effect except as changed, deleted, or amended by the NAC.

B. Meeting Dates

The National Accreditation meeting will be held annually on the last Wednesday and Thursday of July. The Membership Committee shall meet on Tuesday/Wednesday and National Commission on Wednesday/Thursday.

C. Membership of NAC

The National Accreditation Commission membership consists of one voting Commissioner from each participating LCMS district and the NLSA Director. The Commissioner shall be sent at district's expense to the annual National Commission meeting. If districts choose to send a regional representative (representing and sponsored by more than one district), that representative will have one vote. Since the National Commission meets annually, recommendations must be received from the districts two months before the commission meeting (June 15) in order to be considered at the annual meeting. The directors of the LCMS Board for District and Congregational Services—School Ministry and Child Ministry are non-voting advisory members of the Commission. A non-voting high school advisory member is selected and supported by the Association of Lutheran Secondary Schools.

D. Member Publicity

The names of current National Accreditation Commissioners shall be listed on the District and Congregational School Ministry website and Lutheran School Portal each year.

E. Responsibilities of NAC

The primary responsibilities of the National Accreditation Commission:

1. Grant formal approval of accreditation to schools recommended by the districts.
2. Consider and adopt revisions in the NLSA process, standards, or any other materials produced by NLSA.
3. Supervise other matters related to national accreditation for LCMS schools.
4. Provide a liaison who represents the district to the National Accreditation Commission and the National Accreditation Commission to the district.
5. When necessary, consider revocation of accreditation from schools in violation of NLSA requirements.
6. Provide contact persons for those districts and schools that are interested in national accreditation.
7. Assist districts with the implementation of the national accreditation process.
8. Elect NLSA leaders.

9. Determine budget and fees of NLSA and NAC.
10. Determine operating procedures for NAC and NLSA.

F. Committees

1. NLSA Membership Committee

The NLSA membership committee is responsible to review and discuss accreditation applications and makes recommendations to the National Commission about the accreditation status of applicant schools.

The NLSA Chair-elect shall serve as the chairperson for the Membership Committee.

The NLSA membership committee is appointed by the National Director. The term of appointment is one year. The committee shall include preschool, elementary and high school representation.

The membership committee, after careful review of application materials and visiting team reports will:

- a. Recommend accreditation or denial of accreditation to the National Accreditation Commission for all candidate schools.
- b. Recommend levels of accreditation for all candidate schools
- c. Make recommendations about continued accreditation for provisional schools identified by the commission at its previous meeting.
- d. Consider actions related to specific schools that were identified by district commissions.

2. Additional Short Term Committees and Task Forces

The National Director may appoint short term committees or task forces to address specific needs. These groups operate at the discretion and under the advisement of the NLSA Executive Committee. Task forces and short term committees may be appointed to plan or consider actions related to but are not limited to:

Administrative functions

Financial concerns

Materials

Operating procedures

G. Operating Procedures

1. **Authority.** National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) is authorized by LCMS Life Together and directed by the National Accreditation Commission (NAC).

NLSA is a service provided by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Life Together.

2. **Decisions.** Operating procedures and decisions of the NAC are subject to approval of LCMS Life Together. Annual reports about NLSA and NAC shall be presented to the LCMS Director of Lutheran Schools, Executive Director of LCMS Life Together and the districts by the NLSA Director.

H. Commissioners

The NAC is made up of one commission member from each LCMS district involved in NLSA, selected and sponsored by the district under the direction of the district Education Executive. The commissioner's term of office runs from the beginning of one NAC meeting until the beginning of the next NAC meeting—a one year term to be renewed as desired by the District Education Executive.

1. Qualifications for NLSA Commissioners

It is highly recommended that the following qualifications guide the selection process by the District Executive as he or she selects and appoints the District NLSA commissioner, who will represent the district at the National Accreditation Commission meeting. The successful candidate should:

- a. Have no fewer than five years of successful teaching experience in a school operated by one or more LCMS congregations.
- b. Currently serve as a teacher or administrator in a Lutheran (LCMS) high school, elementary school or preschool or have recently retired from that ministry.
- c. Have served on an NLSA visiting team.
- d. Have served as an NLSA school consultant.
- e. Have been trained as both an NLSA team captain and school consultant.
- f. Have helped lead the NLSA process at a school where he or she was serving.
- g. Be an acknowledged leader and spokesperson for Lutheran school educators and education in the district.

2. Selection

- a. Each district involved in National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) is entitled to have one commissioner (voting member/representative) at the annual National Accreditation Commission (NAC) meeting.
- b. Each commissioner is selected by, or under the direction of, the district education executive.
- c. Expenses for the commissioner to attend the NAC meeting will be paid by the District which he or she represents.

3. Term of Office

The Commissioner's term of office is one year, to be renewed as desired by the District Education Executive.

4. Duties

- a. Attend and represent the District Accreditation Commission at the annual National Accreditation Commission meeting.
- b. Serve as an active member of a NAC committee and, as requested, on NLSA task forces.
- c. Present concerns, requests, and recommendations of his or her district to the NAC.
- d. Prepare and submit the annual district NLSA report to the NAC. The report shall include district accreditation activity, decisions of the District Accreditation Commission (DAC), and recommendations to the NAC. The NLSA office must receive a school's written report no later than June 15.
- e. Promote NLSA in the district and help district schools throughout the accreditation process.
- f. Be a member of and provide leadership for the DAC.
- g. Be the liaison between the NAC and the district.
- h. Provide for a training program for NLSA team captains and school consultants in the district.
- i. Arrange for appropriate presentations of the NLSA certificates to newly accredited schools.
- j. Seek formal written arrangements with state and regional accrediting agencies that have granted accreditation to schools in the district.
- k. Keep the District Accreditation Commission, team captains, and NLSA consultants aware of NAC decisions and changes in NLSA materials and procedures.

I. Advisors

The LCMS Director of Schools, an early childhood educator who is appointed by the NLSA Director and an ALSS appointed Lutheran high school representative are considered non-voting advisory members to the National Accreditation Commission.

J. Voting

Only commission members may vote at NAC meetings, and each will have one vote. If more than one district collectively selects and sponsors an NAC member, such as a regional representative, that commission member shall have one vote, regardless of how many districts he or she represents. Other district and national education

executives may attend NAC meetings, and will have voice but no vote except on NAC committees. The NLSA Director will have one vote. All decisions of the NAC will be made by a simple majority vote by those present and voting.

K. Executive Committee

1. Membership

Voting members of the executive committee are: chairperson, chairperson elect, secretary, and the NLSA director. The elected members of the executive committee will be chosen at the NAC Annual Meeting and begin their terms at the end of that NAC Annual Meeting. Officers may not succeed themselves.

2. Duties: The Executive Committee has the authority to:

- a. Pursue cooperative arrangements with other regional accreditation agencies and associations.
- b. Prepare the NAC agenda.
- c. Nominate candidates for elective positions on the Executive Committee.
- d. Serve as ex-officio members of all task forces.
- e. Supervise the NLSA process between commission meetings.
- f. Evaluate the NLSA Director.
- g. Review the strategic plan annually and implement changes and additions to the plan and report to the NAC.
- h. Consider and approve or deny school applications for accreditation extensions.

3. Meetings: The Executive Committee shall meet at least once between NAC annual meetings.

4. Expenses: Officers expenses incurred during official NLSA business other than the NAC annual meeting are to be paid by NLSA.

5. Roles

a. Chairperson

The NAC Chairperson Elects assumes the role of the Chairperson at the conclusion of his/her two-year term. The term of office as Chairperson is two years, beginning at the close of the NAC meeting in which the new Vice Chairperson is elected and ending at the close of the second annual meeting following his/her election.

The Chairperson shall:

- 1) Preside at all NAC meetings.

- 2) Prepare, with the help of the NLSA Director, the agendas for the NAC meetings.
- 3) Poll NAC members for emergency decisions necessary between NAC meetings.
- 4) Provide advice and support to the NLSA Director.
- 5) Administer all requests for appeals from schools and districts.
- 6) Coordinate and oversee assigned NAC committees.
- 7) Serve as an ex-officio member of all NAC task forces.

b. Chairperson Elect

The Chairperson elect is elected by the NAC by secret ballot at an annual meeting. The term of office is two years, beginning at the close of the NAC meeting in which the Chairperson elect is elected and ending at the close of the second annual meeting following his/her election. At the conclusion of his/her term, the Chairperson elect will automatically become the Chairperson for the following two years.

The Chairperson Elect shall:

- 1) Preside over the NAC meetings in the absence of chairperson.
- 2) Assist the National Director with the preparation of the agendas for NAC meetings.
- 3) Provide advice and support to the chairperson and the Executive Director.
- 4) Coordinate and oversee assigned NAC committees.
- 5) Lead the Nomination committee.
- 6) Serve as an ex-officio member to all task forces.

c. Secretary

The NAC Secretary is elected by the NAC by secret ballot at an annual meeting. The term of office is three years, beginning at the close of the NAC meeting in which the Secretary is elected and ending at the close of the third annual meeting following his/her election. The Secretary may not succeed himself/herself.

The Secretary shall:

- 1) Record the minutes of the NAC meetings and distribute copies of those minutes to the members of the NAC.
- 2) Preside over the NAC meetings in the absence of the chairperson and vice-chair, and, when so presiding, appoint a secretary for that term.
- 3) Use electronic and digital means whenever possible to:

- a) Communicate decisions and actions of the NAC to appropriate persons.
- b) When appropriate, provide appropriate public relations news releases and articles.
- c) Communicate as appropriate with other accreditation programs to promote cooperative efforts for the benefit of Lutheran schools.
- 4) Coordinate and oversee assigned NAC committees.
- 5) Serve as an ex-officio member of all NAC task forces.

d. NLSA Director

The NLSA Director is responsible for the administration of NLSA and the NAC. The National Director is appointed by the NLSA Executive Committee in consultation with the Director of School Ministry. The NLSA Director reports directly to the NAC. According to the LCMS Department of Human Resources, this position is equivalent to an Associate Director of LCMS District and Congregational Services—School Ministry.

The Director shall:

- 1) Revise and reprint NLSA materials as directed by NAC.
- 2) Receive a list of approved consultants, and appoint for each school at the time of application the person approved by the District Accreditation Commission.
- 3) Distribute NLSA materials to schools that have applied and paid the application fee.
- 4) Administer the deposit and expenditure of NLSA funds according to the budget and procedures adopted by the NAC.
- 5) Communicate as needed with member schools and applicants, districts, and District Accreditation Commissions.
- 6) Appoint members of NLSA site visiting teams.
- 7) Maintain current files for applicants and member schools, including correspondence and annual progress reports.
- 8) Provide annual reports to the NAC, Board for District and Congregational Services (DCS), and participating districts.
- 9) Assist the chairperson with the preparation of the agendas for NAC and Executive Board meetings.
- 10) Serve as official liaison with other accrediting programs and agencies.
- 11) Supervise the work of the office secretary.
- 12) Prepare and distribute NLSA Certificates of Accreditation along with letters of commendation.

- 13) Determine which self-study document should be used by a school preparing for re-accreditation.
- 14) Encourage and provide national or regional training events for team captains and school consultants as needed.
- 15) Serve as ex-officio member and provide resources to all NAC task forces.
- 16) Develop activities and procedures for the District Accreditation Commissions to remain faithful to NLSA.
- 17) Have oversight responsibility for maintaining compliance to NLSA policies and procedures.
- 18) Develop and implement an ongoing improvement plan for NLSA to be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee and the Director of School Ministry. This plan is to include a vision for NLSA.
- 19) Assign and supervise the selection of Visiting Team Report Reviewers by the membership committee.
- 20) Promote NLSA.
- 21) Uphold the credibility of NLSA.
- 22) Preserve the fiscal integrity of NLSA.
- 23) Follow the policies as adopted by the NAC.
- 24) Provide visionary leadership for NLSA.
- 25) Report to the Director of School Ministry.
- 26) Be responsible for all information that is shared on the Lutheran School Portal.
- 27) Write proposals and secure grants, sharing information about grants with the Director of School Ministry.
- 28) Track and report to the NAC any schools whose visiting team members were not appropriately appointed by the NLSA Director.

XIV. Office Secretary

A. History

The position of part-time Office Secretary was established in 1989.
The Office Secretary became a full time position in 1994.

B. Hours - Benefits

NLSA will pay benefits as outlined in Concordia Plan Services and following the guidelines established by the LCMS human resources policies.

C. Job Description

The Office Secretary will:

1. Maintain financial records.
 - a. Process check requests and travel expenses (accounts payable)
 - b. Process check deposits (accounts receivable)
 - c. Review general ledger from accounting department for accuracy
2. Maintain records on all schools in the NLSA process (from application until termination).
 - a. Processing of applications
 - b. Reminding of time schedule and missing information from reports
 - c. Retaining copies of Self-Study Reports and Visiting Team Reports
 - d. Updating changes in address, principals, administrators, etc.
 - e. Correspondence with schools, consultants, etc.
 - f. Respond to all NLSA questions and concerns
 - g. Maintain appropriate and accurate information in the NLSA database
3. Mail required form letters at appropriate times.
 - a. Annual District Report letters
 - b. Billing statements
4. Make appropriate mailings to NAC members, district leaders, and accredited schools.
5. Maintain an inventory of materials on the annual CD and website information.
6. Update and create new manuals as the NAC determines, editing and revise as needed (working closely with Board for Communication Services in updating, producing and ordering the printing of new CDs).
7. Provide reports as requested to Executive Director.
8. Provide annual reports to NAC.
 - a. List of accredited schools
 - b. List of candidate schools
 - c. List of in process schools
 - d. Annual financial report
 - e. Proposed budget

9. Make arrangements for annual NAC meeting.
 - a. Arrange for meeting room
 - b. Make reservations at hotel for participants
 - c. Arrange for meals
 - d. Prepare notebooks for participants
 - e. Attend NAC meeting
10. Other duties as assigned by the NLSA Executive Director.

XV. Office Procedures

- A. **Visiting Team Report—Copies.** District commissioners must provide two copies of the visiting team report to the NLSA office. Schools send copies to the district commission as required by the district. The visiting team report is due before May 15 to the district office in order to be considered at the annual NAC meeting for accreditation.
- B. **Self-Study Report—Copies.** Schools must provide one copy of the self-study report to the national office in St. Louis in addition to any copies required by the district. The self-study report is due one month before the site visit.
- C. **Fiscal Year.** Dates for the NLSA fiscal year shall be 7/1 — 6/30.
- D. **Informing Accrediting Schools.** A form letter should be sent to each newly accredited school acknowledging the current status of their accreditation within 30 days of the annual meeting.
- E. **News Releases.** A sample news release for accredited schools is located on the NLSA CD. Schools are encouraged to send a news release to “Lutheran Witness” district editors.
- F. **Self-Study Report Retention.** Self-Study Reports are to be kept by the district full term (five years). Self-Study Reports are to be kept by the NLSA office for one year following acceptance.
- G. **Visiting Team Report Retention.** Visiting Team reports are to be kept by the national office for five years.
- H. **Travel Expenses.** Reimbursement procedures and payments are to be in line with synodical guidelines for travel expenses.
- I. **NLSA Office.** NLSA office (files, material and office secretary) shall be located at the International Center, St. Louis.
- J. **Due Dates.**
 1. Annual fees are due and payable in the NLSA office by Oct. 1.

2. District responses to the Cumulative Annual Reports are due before June 15 at the NLSA office.
 3. District Report to the National Accreditation Commission is due to the national office by June 15.
- K. **Fees and Expenses.** Fees and expenses related to state or regional NLSA cooperative arrangements are not the responsibility of NLSA, but of the districts and schools within those regions.

XVI. Materials

- A. **Distribution.** Each year a CD containing updates of NLSA materials shall be sent to member schools, district education executives and to NAC Commissioners at no cost.
- B. **Format.** Schools applying for accreditation will receive as a part of the application process NLSA materials via electronic media. All NLSA accredited schools will be sent updated materials via electronic media at the beginning of each calendar year. Materials received at either the time of application or annually may be downloaded and copied for use at that school.
- C. **Cumulative Annual Report Form.** A sample Cumulative Annual Report is included in the *NLSA Administrator's Manual* found on the CD.
- D. **Document Revision.** All NLSA documents will be subject to ongoing review by means of school, district, or Executive Committee referral to the NAC. Documents will be revised by staff to remain in accordance with NAC decisions. The date of the most recent revision will appear on the back cover of the document.

All NLSA materials, website and manuals are edited after the NAC meeting to include changes made by the NAC. Major edits of manuals shall take place on a three-year cycle:

First Year: Policy Manual, Questions and Answers, Brochure, Guides for Evaluating (all three levels), Standards

Second Year: Standards Based Manuals: Administrator's, Consultant's, Captain's, High School, Early Childhood, Team Member, Self-Study Report Form

Third Year: Ongoing Improvement Manuals: Administrator's, Consultant's, Captain's, Team Member, Self-Study Report Form

The NLSA Executive Committee is authorized to establish a procedure for periodic, comprehensive, collective review of all NLSA documents, and to report to the NAC revisions or drafts that eliminate inconsistencies, contradictions, redundancy and/or lack of uniformity in presentation.

XVII. Communication

News about NLSA is updated regularly and shared electronically on the Lutheran School Portal at www.lportal.net, and the District and Congregational Services website. This information is updated regularly.

XVIII. Cooperative Arrangements

A. Procedure for Cooperative Arrangements

1. The NLSA Director may negotiate arrangements between NLSA and other accreditation groups (states, districts, associations) for the benefit of Lutheran schools and their districts. Such arrangements must be submitted for approval by the NAC at its next meeting.
2. When negotiating a cooperative arrangement with a regional accrediting association or agency, NLSA shall defer to the regional association or agency with respect to the length of accreditation as long as it is less than five years.
3. Any modification of the process as it relates to district procedures should be approved with the NLSA Director. District and national communications must reflect any approved differences.
4. Guidelines for district adaptations to NLSA standards include:
 - a. If districts only add to the existing NLSA program, the district program should be accepted.
 - b. If districts take away from NLSA, the executive committee must decide if NLSA standards are upheld “in essence.”
5. NLSA supports district efforts to supplement their standards or procedures, but disapproves any District Commission deletion of NLSA standards or procedures. Supplemental standards/procedures should be noted in the district commission’s annual report. The variations will be reviewed by the Cooperative Arrangements Committee—NLSA. The executive committee will recommend acceptance or rejection to the National Accreditation Commission.

B. Use of NLSA Materials

1. All NLSA materials are copyrighted materials. Materials may not be reproduced without permission.
2. Approval of any request to use NLSA materials may be granted by the NLSA Director, but those using NLSA materials must give credit to NLSA as the source of the materials.
3. Any group that uses NLSA materials as a basis for their own accreditation process shall provide NLSA with a list of their revisions or modifications (if any). They shall also provide the NLSA Director with documentation that they are in compliance with NLSA policy not to use the NLSA name.

C. Agreements Approved

The National Accreditation Commission has approved agreements between NLSA and AdvanceED North Central Association (NCA) and Southern Association (SACS), Northwest Association (NASCU), Middle States (MSACS), Western Association (WASC), AdvanED.

D. Transfer of Credits

Schools accredited by NLSA will assure students transferring from either another NLSA school or from a school accredited by an agency holding a reciprocal agreement with NLSA, that the transcript will be studied and credit granted when and where applicable.

E. Guide for Evaluating

1. Schools that seek dual accreditation (NLSA and a secular agency) and choose to use another agency's materials and process, must use the appropriate level of NLSA's "Guide for Evaluating the Christian Mission" as a supplement to the secular agency's materials and have one or more visiting team members appointed by NLSA.
2. Schools that hold a valid accreditation status with a recognized regional accreditation agency may enter their initial NLSA accreditation process using the Ongoing Improvement process.

F. NLSA Representative on a Secular Visiting Team

Lutheran schools that seek NLSA accreditation as well as another agency's accreditation (dual accreditation) may use the NLSA process and materials or the process and materials of the other agency (regional, state, NAEYC) for the Self Study. If the school uses the secular agency's materials, that agency will appoint the visiting team. However, schools seeking dual accreditation with NLSA must have at least one member of the visiting team appointed by the NLSA Director. The NLSA representative may serve as one of the secular agency's appointees. In other words, one person may be appointed by WASC for their team and the same person may be appointed by NLSA as their representative. NLSA representatives are recruited by the school, approved by the LCMS district, and appointed by the NLSA Director.

The responsibilities of the NLSA representative include:

1. Ensure that the school has, in essence, kept the NLSA standards.
2. Serve as a full member of the visiting team, staying for the full visit.
3. Make sure the school sends an electronic copy of the full Visiting Team Report to the district office.

4. Attach a recommendation for NLSA accreditation to the Visiting Team Report (VTR).
5. Write one section of the VTR for the religious dimension of the school, based on the school's "Guide for Evaluating the Christian Mission" supplement to the secular agency's report, making recommendations as appropriate.
6. Share significant comments related to the school's religious dimension at the team's exit report.

XIX. District Report

Each district is to give NLSA an Annual District Report regarding changes made to NLSA materials, problems experienced, schools accredited by the district, schools recommended for NLSA, relationships with other accrediting bodies, and district recommendations to the NAC.

- A. **Deadline.** The written report is to be sent to the NLSA Director before June 15.
- B. **Format.** Districts are to report on the NLSA Annual District Report Form, which includes a notation of the district executive's verification.

XX. District—NLSA Relationship

- A. **District Executive Involvement.** All applications for NLSA must be signed and submitted by the District Education Executive of the district in which the school is located. At all steps in the accreditation process the District Education Executive is to be kept informed.
- B. **District Accreditation.** In order to receive national accreditation, those schools that are located in districts which have district accreditation available must achieve district accreditation before or in the same process in which they are considered for national accreditation.
- C. **District Accreditation Commission (DAC)**
 1. **Membership**
 - a. Any number, appointed by the district school executive.
 - b. Term of members to be determined by the district executive.
 - c. Should include a Lutheran early childhood representative and a Lutheran high school representative if such schools are involved in NLSA in the district, but will be primarily Lutheran elementary school principals who are familiar with NLSA.

- d. The NLSA District Commissioner is on the District Commission and usually chairs it.

2. Duties

- a. Oversee the NLSA process in the district and communicate NLSA information to schools in the district, encouraging schools to participate and supporting those who do.
- b. Support and advise the NLSA District Commissioner.
- c. Recommend all consultants and team members to the NLSA Director, who appoints all consultants, captains, and visiting team members.
- d. Recommend all schools for accreditation by the NAC (National Accreditation Commission) in the Annual District Report, due before June 15.
- e. Recommend the NLSA process (Standards Based or Ongoing Improvement) for each school to use. Require the Standards Based process if necessary.
- f. If needed, adapt the NLSA process and/or materials so they are more suitable for schools in the district, and seek the NLSA Director's approval of all adaptations.
- g. Provide training for NLSA captains and consultants.
- h. Review all Cumulative Annual Reports and report problems to the National Accreditation Commission in the Annual District Report.
- i. Oversee the remediation of any major deficiencies and withdraw accreditation if not remedied within the time parameters set by the Visiting Team.
- j. Receive, review and retain Visiting Reports from applicant schools. Send two copies of Visiting Team Reports to the national office. Include the "NLSA Face Sheet" and the "NLSA Team Report Submission Checklist" with each Visiting Team Report. All reports must include the School Profile.
- k. Retain all school Visiting Team Reports and Self-Study Reports.
- l. Make recommendations, as needed, to the NAC.
- m. Negotiate state approval of the NLSA process.
- n. Award NLSA certificates of accreditation at appropriate public gatherings.
- o. Review all appeals and recommend related action to the NAC.
- p. Uphold and support the NLSA processes and materials.
- q. Provide assistance to administrators in developing their five year school improvement plan.
- r. When an accredited school experiences a change of status that may affect accreditation, the District Accreditation Commission will evaluate the status

of the school and make specific recommendations to the NAC for review by that National Accreditation Commission.

XXI. Re-accreditation

The process for re-accreditation is to be started at least by August 1 of the fourth year of accreditation. In the year a school submits its re-application fee it does not pay an annual fee.

The Ongoing Improvement (OI) Process is an alternative to the Standards Based Process for re-accreditation. Schools may choose which process they will use, but it must be approved by the District Accreditation Commission (DAC). The DAC may require the school to repeat the use of the Standards Based Process if they feel the school needs to emphasize fulfillment of NLSA standards.

XXII. Appendix: Job Descriptions

Job Description of NLSA School Consultants

Qualifications: Unless the district has requested an exception, the NLSA Director will appoint as a consultant only a person who:

- Has received training by the district or NLSA to be a NLSA School Consultant.
- Is currently or has retired recently from serving as a teacher or administrator in a Lutheran (LCMS) school (childcare, early childhood, elementary, and/or secondary).
- Has successfully led a Lutheran school through the NLSA process used by the school with which he or she will consult.
- Is willing and able to help a Lutheran school through the NLSA process.

Selection:

- The school may request a specific consultant, but the consultant is recommended by the District Executive on the school's NLSA application form, and, on the basis of that recommendation, appointed by the NLSA Director when the school's application is processed by the NLSA office.
- Ordinarily the consultant has experience at the same level of school (early childhood, elementary, secondary) as the school to be consulted.
- The prospective consultant is contacted by the district and/or the school administrator before appointment to determine the consultant's willingness to serve that school. A copy of the letter informing the applying school of their appointed consultant is sent to the consultant.
- At the time of appointment, consultants receive from the district office a copy of the last cumulative annual report made by the school. (8/99) (8/05)

Duties:

- Inform, encourage, and assist the school leaders so the accreditation process will be successful.
- Telephone the school administrator immediately upon being informed of appointment as consultant to become acquainted and to offer assistance.
- If possible, visit the school at least once, preferably twice, at the school's expense, during the first four months of the self-study process. During the visit the consultant should:

Meet with the school administrator.

Meet with the faculty.

Meet with the NLSA Steering Committee.

Observe the school in action for several hours.

- Suggest a tentative timeline for the process, with deadline dates, working backward from the tentative date of the site visit listed on the application form.
- Review and react to preliminary versions of the self-study, including the SIP and Standards Checklist if applicable.
- Answer any questions and encourage progress.
- Maintain contact with the District Education Executive and the District Accreditation Commission.
- Help the school select a Visiting Team Captain from among the district's list of trained and approved team captains. The NLSA Director makes the final appointment.
- Remind the school to request that their suggested team members are appointed by the NLSA Director.
- Consult with the school administrator about other members of the visiting team.
- The consultant of the Standards Based process should not serve on the Visiting Team, but an Ongoing Improvement consultant will serve on the NLSA visiting team, but not as captain.
- Either suggest the site visit be delayed or give approval of the school's readiness for a successful site visit. Help the school reschedule the site visit if necessary.
- Contact the Team Captain, announce your approval of the school's readiness for a successful site visit, share information, and wish the team God's blessings. Announce the completion of your responsibilities to the school administrator and offer ongoing assistance as needed.
- Remind the school to forward one copy of the self-study report to the NLSA office and one copy to the District office as soon as it is completed. In the case of a school seeking accreditation also from another agency, the school should also send a copy of the self-study report to that agency. (8/05)

Job Description for NLSA Visiting Team Captain

Qualifications: Unless the district has requested an exception, the NLSA Director will appoint as a captain only a person who:

- Has received specific training by the district or NLSA to be a visiting team captain.
- Is currently or has recently retired from serving as a teacher or administrator in a Lutheran (LCMS) school (childcare, early childhood, elementary, and/or secondary).
- Has successfully led a Lutheran school through the NLSA process used by the school as which he or she will captain the visiting team.
- Has served on a NLSA visiting team.

- Is willing and able to lead one or more NLSA visiting teams.
- The school may request a qualified team captain, but the captain is recommended by the district and appointed by the NLSA Director.
- The captain shall have experience as the same level of school (early childhood, elementary, secondary) as the school to be visited.
- The prospective captain is contacted by the district and/or the school administrator before appointment to determine the captain's willingness to serve that school. A letter stating the captain's appointment is sent from the NLSA office to district and the school.

Duties:

- Confer with the school administrator on a regular basis until the site visit is completed and the Visiting Team Report has been given to the school.
- Contact the NLSA Consultant to make sure the school is ready to be accredited.
- Together with the administrator, establish a tentative schedule and agenda for the visit.
- Contact the visiting team members as soon as possible after they have been appointed, informing them of the visit schedule and asking them to complete the Assignment Preference Form and a Visiting Team Biography Form.
- Ensure that the captain and all the team members receive the school's Self Study Report no later than one month before the scheduled visit. If the report is not received on time, reschedule the visit.
- Arrange visit details with the school administrator (housing, mileage, meals, team supplies, typist, etc.).
- If possible, hold a meeting of the visiting team on site approximately one month before the visit to review the task and to train the team.
- Make visiting team committee assignments and remind the members to study the Self Study Report before the visit.
- Supervise the team and be a liaison between the administrator and the team during the visit.
- Be a model team member, preparing your report first and leading the team through its review.
- Instruct, direct, encourage, challenge, support, and advise team members during the visit.
- Review rough drafts of team reports before they are typed for first consideration by the team.
- Lead the team in considering, discussing, adapting, correcting, and adopting each committee report.

- Write the visiting team’s Report Summary, listing the team’s recommendation for or against accreditation, outstanding strengths, and any major deficiencies.
- Collect all final committee reports before dismissing the team.
- Lead the team’s Oral Report.
- Edit the Visiting Team Report as needed, and return it to the school within two weeks after the visit. Be sure to include the School Profile of the Self Study Report and remind the school to send copies to the district and the team members.
- Give the school administrator copies of “School Evaluation of Team Captain” and “School Evaluation of Consultant” forms and remind the administrator to send one copy to the NLSA office.
- Remind the school administrator of the responsibility of ongoing school improvement and the annual report.

Accreditation by National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) indicates that the school successfully completed the NLSA process of self-study, reporting, and evaluation by a visiting team and that the visiting team recommended NLSA accreditation as a result of that visit. It is determined, through this process, that the school is worthy of NLSA accreditation. Neither NLSA nor its authorizing agency, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, assume responsibility for the school's quality (or lack thereof) or for variations from NLSA standards either at the time of initial accreditation or at any time during NLSA accreditation.

National Lutheran School Accreditation
1333 S. Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295
Phone: 1-800-248-1930, ext. 1294
Website <http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=595>
Click on Accreditation tab
or go to
www.lsportal.net
Once in the site click National, then NLSA

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