

National Lutheran School Accreditation

Validation Team Report

Revised September 2023

St. James Lutheran School

Northrop, MN

Jan. 31 - Feb. 2, 2024

Michelle King, Captain

Andrea Cacka

Brian Kube

Sean Martens



FOREWORD

Becoming accredited is a strenuous process. The school and its administration are highly commended for their efforts in this ongoing accreditation process. The preparation and the arrangements for the Validation Team were well done. It is the hope and prayer of the members of the Validation Team that the enclosed document is accurate and helpful for the continued improvement of **St. James Lutheran School**.

The members of the Validation Team express sincere gratitude to the administration, staff and community of **St. James Lutheran School** for the opportunity to serve on the Validation Team and for the kindness shown during the visit.

St. James Lutheran School is a good program. This was reflected not only in the Self-Study Report but also in the comments and observations of the Validation Team. The school effectively represents the Christian faith and values not only to its children and families, but also to the surrounding community.

The Self-Study Report is carefully written and includes specific recommendations to be considered seriously by the school and all constituents of **St. James Lutheran School** and its sponsoring congregation, **St. James Lutheran Church**. Not every suggestion must be followed, however, each is to be considered and addressed in follow-up reports, specifically the annual ongoing cumulative report submitted to the school's district office.

The report was written collaboratively and edited by the Validation Team with minor editing completed by the Team Captain. The report reflects the talents and expertise of all team members. Wherever possible, specific and practical recommendations were made to help address concerns.

The Team Captain, Team Members and the Consultant pledge their continued support and assistance in the implementation process and look forward to hearing about and/or seeing the progress of the School Action Plan.

May the Lord richly bless the staff and constituents of **St. James Lutheran School** so that with the power of the Holy Spirit they might continue to proclaim His Gospel ever more effectively to the children and families they serve.

In His Service,

Michelle King
Validation Team Captain

DISCLAIMER

Limitations on the distribution, use and scope of this document.

It is the official intent of the National Lutheran School Accreditation Commission that this report is considered a privileged document, to be submitted by the Team Captain of the Validation Team directly to the administration of the school. The distribution of the report and its availability for public consideration rests solely in the hands of the school administration.

Neither the Team Captain nor the other members of the Validation Team are authorized to release any of the information contained in this report without the approval of the administration of the school.

The primary purpose of the Validation Team was to examine the educational ministry of the school, including curriculum, learning materials, student needs and interests, staffing and facilities. The Validation Team assessed the effectiveness of the total school program in meeting the educational objectives and National Lutheran School Accreditation Standards.

It is not the purpose of the Validation Team to evaluate individual teacher performance. The use of this report as an official assessment of any staff member's professional competency is a violation of the process and is not the intent of the school evaluation. Such use is inherently invalid since at no time during the Validation Team Visit was the team concerned with the evaluation of individual teacher performance.

The Validation Team and the Validation Team Report assist the school in its own process as a guideline for continuous growth. Neither the team nor the report is presumed to be the authority for validating any claims regarding health, safety or personnel issues. Such matters are the sole responsibility of the school.

Validation Team Member Biographic Information

Michelle King currently serves as the Principal and first and second grade teacher of Immanuel Lutheran School, Gaylord, MN. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana. Michelle has taught in all grade levels preschool through eighth grade, except kindergarten in her twenty-eight years of Lutheran education in classrooms in Missouri, Illinois, Minnesota, and Wyoming. Michelle's experience with National Lutheran School Accreditation includes serving as a captain and team member on four previous teams in Minnesota and multiple teams in Missouri as well.

Andrea Cacka is the School Principal and 7th Grade Math Teacher at Redeemer Christian Academy in Wayzata, MN. Andy grew up in the LCMS Church in Spooner Wisconsin, then moved to Minnesota where she attended a Lutheran grade school and St. Croix Lutheran High School. She is a graduate of MSU-Mankato with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education (K-6), and licensure in Special Education (K-12/EMH). This is her 15th year teaching in the classroom. God has given her a wide range of classroom teaching experience from Kindergarten up through 8th grade. This was Andrea's first time as a team member on an Accreditation Validation Team. It was a very rewarding experience supporting the Ministry of St. James Lutheran School.

Brian Kube currently serves as Principal at St. Paul Lutheran in Fairmont, MN. He earned his degree at Concordia St. Paul University and is currently obtaining his Masters in Educational Leadership from Concordia St. Paul University. He has been in the field of Education for 26 years. The last 10 years as a principal, and spent time teaching at the High School and Elementary levels. He has served on a number of National Lutheran Accreditation Teams in Minnesota and in Illinois

Sean Martens serves as the Assistant to the President, Education and Commissioned Ministers for the Minnesota South District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He has been a Lutheran school principal, instructor, and coach in Minnesota, Nebraska, and Nevada at the elementary, high school and college levels. He earned Bachelor's degrees in Chemistry, Biology, and Secondary Education and Education Masters Degrees (2) in Curriculum and Instruction and Administration from Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska. Martens is a certified AoR Reconciler, a 2003 graduate of the School Leadership Development (SLED) program, and has been a SLED program mentor. Martens has served as a Consultant, Team Captain or team member on more than 25 accreditation teams and serves on the Minnesota South District Accreditation Commission. Martens also serves on COGNIA (AdvancED) accreditation teams and is ELEOT certified.

REPORT SUMMARY

Overall School Performance Level

| Standard | Rating Total | Possible Score |
|---|--------------|----------------|
| Standard 1 | 11 | 16 |
| Standard 2 | 30 | 40 |
| Standard 3 | 23 | 40 |
| Standard 4 | 12 | 16 |
| Standard 5 | 17 | 24 |
| Standard 6 | 11 | 16 |
| Standard 7 | 9 | 12 |
| Total | 113 | 164 |
| Average (total ÷ 41, rounded to hundredths decimal) | 2.76 | 4.00 |

The Validation Team’s Overall Impression of the School

The staff of St. James Lutheran School show a huge heart for ministry of the LCMS. The teachers are supportive of each other and strive to bring each student to academic success. The Pastor of St. James is a strong spiritual leader of the school and this is recognized by many.

Outstanding Strengths

- The staff of St. James shows a strong Lutheran identity.
- The Pastor of St. James works hard as a joint spiritual leader and head master. His role is recognized as an asset by many.

Major Deficiencies

Nomination of Powerful Practices

School Shepherd Nomination:

YES

NO

If, yes, please list the Name and contact information for the pastor:

Pastor John Henry, III

108 South James Street, PO Box 315

Northrop, MN 56075

Accreditation Recommendation

We the members of the Validation Team recommend:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Accreditation in Good Standing | X |
|--------------------------------|---|

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Provisional Accreditation | |
|---------------------------|--|

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Denying Accreditation | |
|-----------------------|--|

for **St. James Lutheran School of Northorp, MN**

Michelle King, Captain

TEAM FINDINGS

The Team Findings section presents the Validation Team's evaluation of the NLSA Standards and Indicators. It also identifies Strengths, Concerns and related Recommendations that were identified by the Validation Team through a review of the school's prepared documentation along with observations and interviews that were conducted during the visit.

Accreditation Standards and Indicators

Standards define what's important for schools to be successful. In an accreditation self-study process they provide the educational community with the opportunity to evaluate a school's effectiveness, identify strengths and concerns and plan for intentional and continuous improvement. They establish benchmarks that schools must achieve through intentional planning and assessment. The NLSA standards are a compilation of expectations related to what is most important for Lutheran schools. They have been refined and adjusted and align closely with the research based standards that have been prepared by secular partner accrediting agencies. They allow Lutheran schools to use the very best that the educational community has prepared while staying true to the mission of sharing Christ with children and families.

This section contains an evaluation of each NLSA Accreditation Standard and Indicators, conclusions related to strengths and concerns that were identified by the visiting team and evidence and practices that led to the team's conclusions. Indicators are evaluated and rated individually by the visiting team using a four-level performance rubric. The Standard Performance Level is the average of the indicator scores for the standard.

Highly Functional (4) — This is an area of outstanding strength of the school. It not only meets ALL the benchmarks related to the General Indicator of Success, but is 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. The Validation Team verifies that these practices and/or documentation exceed the Operational (3) level.

Operational (3) — This is the expected rating for a strong Lutheran school. ALL benchmarks must be met completely for this indicator to be considered Operational. The condition is supported with documentation and/or observable practices that support the rating.

Emerging (2) — Improvement is required in this area. If one or more benchmarks are not fully met, the rating must be Emerging. This indicator is recognized as important by the school, but is inconsistently applied. Any benchmark not fully met must be addressed in the School Action Plan.

Not Evident (1) — There is observable conflict or deficiency with this indicator at the school. A majority of the expected benchmarks are not met or addressed with sufficient practices, evidence or documentation. This rating may result in the assignment of Provisional Status. This must be addressed in the School Action Plan.

Survey Responses

NLSA survey questions are correlated with the seven Standard areas and are to be used at the beginning of a Self-Study process. Survey questions are developed for the following groups:

- Parents
- Teacher and Staff
- Students in Grades 1 – 3
- Students in Grades 4 – 12
- Board of Education (or similar body if governed or named differently)

Parent Survey administered with a minimum 20% response rate, and analyzed per Self-Study Part II Page 10:

YES

NO

Comment: 70% of the parent population responded to the survey. The responses were mostly positive from parents. Parents would like to see updates in technology (which have taken place already), after school activities that are not sports, and teachers being able to challenge students who would benefit from the challenge.

Teacher and Staff Survey administered with a minimum 80% response rate, and analyzed per Self-Study Part II Page 10:

YES

NO

Comment: 100%, all 5, of the full-time teachers responded to the survey. Teachers feel that the school could use continual reminding to the community of their existence, location, and identity as St. James Lutheran Elementary School. Teachers have not had formal evaluations in a few years due to changes in administration, but they have discussed and evaluated each other informally as peers.

Students Grade 1-3 Survey administered with a minimum 40% response rate, and analyzed per Self-Study Part II Page 10:

YES

NO

Comment: The students felt the teachers want them to learn new things and do their best. Students overwhelmingly feel that the teachers want them to learn about Jesus and let their parents know how they are doing in school. Students also expressed they receive help and talk to other teachers besides their classroom teacher.

Students Grades 4-12 Survey administered with a minimum 40% response rate, and analyzed per Self-Study Part II Page 10:

YES

NO

Comment:

Students feel that the teachers care about them, want them to learn, and share Jesus everyday. Students felt safe in expressing their concern of having a quiet place to work in the school building. Teachers are conscious of this concern and will work to help find places to remedy this.

Board of Education (or similar body) Survey administered with a minimum 80% response rate, and analyzed per Self-Study Part II Page 10:

YES

NO

Comment: No survey was administered.

Standard 1: Purpose

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 1 prepared and in good order?

Standard 1 Required Evidence*:

Final School Action Plan from previous accreditation

YES

NO

N/A if it is the first accreditation

Strategic Plan if applicable and currently utilized by the school

YES

NO

Written purpose/philosophy/mission statement

YES

NO

N/A

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 1?

1:01* The school's written purpose embraces a Lutheran identity that is rooted in Holy Scripture and is committed to faith formation, academic excellence and Christian service.

YES

NO

1:02* School leadership and staff members understand and accept the purpose of the school.

YES

NO

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| <p>1:03 School leadership (administration and governing board) uses the mission statement as the foundation and reference for all planning.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school's purpose was developed in accordance with governance policy. ● The school's purpose is engaged, aligned and enacted with its vision, values, school goals, learner outcomes and student activities. ● The school's mission statement supports and aligns with the congregational mission statement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Church constitution ● Joint Mission Statement ● Student Handbook ● Faculty Handbook ● Joint Mission Statement | 3 | 3 |
| <p>1:04 School leadership (administration and board) regularly assembles school constituencies (including but not limited to faculty, staff, parents, students and congregational stakeholders) to review, clarify and renew the school's stated purpose.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school's purpose is communicated effectively to staff, students and stakeholders. ● The school regularly evaluates and reviews the alignment of purpose, vision, values, school goals, learner outcomes and student activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Faculty Handbook ● School website ● Board Interview | 3 | 2 |
| <p>1:05 The school's purpose is displayed and reflected in school activities and in the</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school's purpose is | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Building Observations ● School website | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|--|---|-------------------|-------------|
| teaching/learning environment in classrooms. | <p>displayed in each classroom and in the hallways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school's purpose is readily seen on the school's website. ● The school's purpose is included in written communications distributed to families, such as the PTL handbook and promotional materials that are supplied to prospective families. ● School events, curriculum and discipline are aligned with the school's mission statement and purpose and promote a positive teaching/learning environment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School logo ● School website ● Flyer/Promo Material ● Artwork on the walls ● Annual Musical ● Parent Interview ● Survey results | | |
| 1:06 New employees are informed about the school's purpose and its appropriate engagement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New employees are given an orientation packet and have an orientation meeting with the school administrator. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher Interview | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|--|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New employees utilize mentors to assist them in learning about the school's purpose and how to carry it out. ● The school's purpose is outlined in the job description for each employee. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher Interview ● Faculty Handbook | | |
| Total | | | 12 | 11 |
| Standard One Overall Rating (Total ÷ 4, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth) | | | 3 | 2.75 |

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 1? 2.75

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

- YES
- NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

- 1:04 - The Board of Education needs to regularly evaluate the mission and purpose of the school.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?

- The church and school share a joint mission statement, making it visible not just to school families but also to the congregation who supports the school.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?

- A formal Mentor Program is needed, this should be used when new full and part time staff are hired.
- The church and school mission statement and purpose should be evaluated yearly to make sure it is what is still being done and look at how to use this statement to stay engaged in the mission in the future.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?

- **1:04** - State the School Mission within the first two pages of the School Handbook
- **1:05** - Create a written Mentor Plan for when there are new hires within the school.

Please list all Validation Team concerns that the school must add to their Final School Action Plan for Standard 1:

- Board of Education regularly evaluate the mission and purpose of the school.

Standard 2: Relationships

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 2 prepared and in good order?

Standard 2 Required Evidence*: Written nondiscrimination statement

YES

NO

Standard 2 Required Evidence*: School discipline code

YES

NO

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 2?

2A:01* The school is operated by one or more of the congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) or maintains an active Recognized Service Organization (RSO) status with the Synod (if an RSO, provide the latest RSO renewal).

YES

NO

2B:01* A statement of nondiscrimination is evident in school-printed materials and assures that students are admitted without regard to race, color or national origin.

YES

NO

2C:01* The climate of the school flows from and supports the school's purpose.

YES

NO

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| <p>2A:02 The school is an extension of the ministry of its sponsoring congregation(s). Church and school work together effectively to accomplish goals related to a well-defined purpose.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The pastor is acknowledged as the spiritual leader of the whole congregation, including the school. ● The pastor demonstrates that he is the spiritual leader of the school and congregation. ● The congregation provides spiritual support for the school and its students. ● Pastor(s) and school staff regularly demonstrate support for each other's ministry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observations ● Dual responsibility of Pastor and Principal ● Dual parish communication ● Confirmation instruction for church and school ● Interview ● Bibles presented to students ● Parent Interview ● Observation ● Teacher Interview | 4 | 4 |
| <p>2A:03 The school concerns itself with the ministry of the whole church and seeks opportunities to support and enhance relationships with its congregation, its district and the national church body.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students participate regularly in congregational life through planned activities available and coordinated with the congregation. ● School staff members are | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student music in church ● Teachers attend district and nationally sponsored conferences ● Support for Lutheran missions - comfort dogs and LHM ● Faculty Interview ● Teacher profiles | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | <p>actively involved in worship and congregational life in their parish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school and congregation plan and work together on behalf of families who do not have an identified church home or who do not attend church regularly. ● The school supports LCMS missions. ● Called teachers participate in required district conferences and events. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interview ● Observation ● Teacher Interviews ● Teacher Interview | | |
| <p>2B:02 The school’s student population reflects the ethnic, racial and economic diversity of the community in which it is located.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school studies the community demographics and compares the information to the demographics of the student body. ● The school embraces and celebrates the demographic diversity of the students it serves and the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Financial aid available for any student to attend St. James ● Colorful Christian images painted around the building represent students from different cultures and diverse groups | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | surrounding community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school has developed ways to enroll students from the community who do not have the economic resources to support tuition-driven enrollment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing tuition assistance to those in need | | |
| 2B:03 The school promotes and encourages the involvement of its teachers and students in community activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school seeks ways to involve its students and teachers in service to the community. ● Staff members are encouraged and provided with opportunities, planned by the school and its congregation, to participate in community activities and service organizations. ● Staff members are engaged in community service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Food shelf ● Caroling ● Thank you baskets ● Cards for Shut-Ins ● VBS ● Fairmont Family Fun Night | 3 | 3 |
| 2B:04 The school has an active Parent-Teacher Organization and/or other parent support groups. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school sponsors educational | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interview with Pastor ● PTL handbook | 2 | 2 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | <p>opportunities for parents and provides a wide variety of parenting resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support groups (i.e., Parent Teacher League, Booster Club, prayer support groups) contribute to the overall good of the school and congregation to support and maintain the school's mission and goals. | <p>+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PTL Board member interviewed during Bd. of Ed Interview Budget/money set aside for school goals (new bus) as well as funding classroom needs, field trips, etc. Zoom meeting to accommodate schedules | | |
| <p>2B:05 The school is known, respected and maintains a positive perception in its community.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is known and respected in its community. The school regularly and frequently shares information with its constituents. Good relationships exist with the local public schools. School facilities are available, when practical, for use by appropriate community groups and activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newspaper clippings Building is used by outside organizations Board of Ed. Interview School newsletter with classroom updates Admin/Teacher Interview Gym and auditorium are reserved by Community groups for events | <p>3</p> | <p>3</p> |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|--|-------------------|-------------|
| <p>2C:02 The school's Christ-centered ethos is visible and evident to visitors.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students demonstrate love for others in response to Christ's love for them. ● Teachers' care for student needs is prominently enacted throughout the school. ● Students worship together daily, either in each classroom or in a school-wide appropriate worship experience with other students. ● Classroom environment, hallway decorations and posted classroom projects demonstrate respect for teachers and peers. ● Student behavior is appropriate to encourage growth and to maintain the school's chosen | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observation of murals in hallway ● Decorations in classrooms ● Observation at drop-off ● Chapel ● Class Devotions ● Parent testimonials ● Observation ● Teacher Interviews ● Classroom schedules ● Teacher Interview ● Pastor Interview ● Observation ● Observation ● Observation ● Teacher Interview ● Job Boards posted in classrooms to support respecting/caring for learning environment | <p>3</p> | <p>3</p> |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | teaching/learning environment. | | | |
| <p>2C:03 Teachers and staff members recognize, value and respect the needs of students.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers demonstrate love for all students in Christ. ● Teachers attend to the individual needs of students. ● Teachers integrate faith principles throughout the day and pray with their students. ● Students are challenged to do their best. ● Students’ spiritual needs are given appropriate support by church and school. ● Law and Gospel are properly divided when discipline is administered. ● Staff demonstrates positive school spirit. ● Through the school’s discipline code, students are assisted to grow in | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discipline Code ● Chapel Schedule ● Job Charts ● Chapel families ● NLSW ● Observation ● Providing Title support and LSEM for students ● Observation ● Teacher interview ● Student Survey ● Pastor Interview ● Discipline Policy ● School newsletter ● Publications ● Observations ● Student handbook | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|--|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | <p>self-control out of love for Christ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When desirable and practical, students are given the opportunity to participate in making school decisions. | | | |
| <p>2C:04 School personnel model Christ's love in their relationships with parents and guardians.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School personnel are approachable and receptive to parental questions or concerns. Parents are viewed by teachers as school partners in the education process. Staff members understand and relate appropriately with school families. Parents and guardians are made to feel welcome at the school. The school provides opportunities for parents to be involved at the school. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Training Guide Volunteer Handbook Mandated Reporting Grandparent's Day Parent Testimonial Parent Interview Parent Interview Volunteer Handbook | <p>3</p> | <p>3</p> |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|--|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The legal rights of parents and legal guardians are protected. ● Parents are encouraged to be positive and supportive of the school. | | | |
| <p>2C:05 Faculty and administration respect and support one another as individual, fellow members of the body of Christ.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Faculty and administration gather for devotions regularly. ● Faculty and administration speak positively about their co-workers at the school. ● Faculty and administration demonstrate support of one another in tangible ways. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Morning Devotions and prayer ● Interview ● Observed ● Teacher Interviews ● Pastor Interview ● Board of Ed Members ● PTL Members ● Observed ● Teacher Interviews ● Pastor Interview ● Board of Ed Members ● PTL Members | 3 | 3 |
| Total | | | 30 | 30 |
| Standard Two Overall Rating (Total ÷ 10, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth) | | | 3.0 | 3.0 |

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 2? 3.0

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

- YES
- NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?

- Pastor's time, talents and ability to lead and communicate are clearly a strength of the Church and School Community.
- Teachers, Pastor and Board of Ed. members all recognize each other's strengths as well as how much each person contributes to the positive, Christian learning environment.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?

- **2B:04** - Provide opportunities for parent education classes that are sponsored by the school. This could occur through written, online, or in-person communication/meetings.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?

Please list all Validation Team concerns that the school must add to their Final School Action Plan for Standard 2:

Standard 3: Leadership

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 3 prepared and in good order?

Standard 3 Required Evidence*: Board or governing authority handbook or policy manual including policies relating to roles of board, administrator and pastor

YES

NO

Standard 3 Required Evidence*: Administrator's job description

YES

NO

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 3?

3A:01* The operating organization designates the governing authority and has written policies clearly defining lines of authority, responsibilities and/or limitations of the governing authority.

YES

NO

3A:02* The operating organization has written policies clearly defining governing authority membership.

YES

NO

3A:03* The governing authority establishes written policies or administrative limitation that empower the administration in operating the school.

YES

NO

3B:01* The administrator demonstrates a personal Christian faith, a commitment to Lutheran education and a dedication to the teaching ministry of the governing authority.

YES

NO

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| 3A:04 The governing authority is organized around written policy and understands and operates within its role and function. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The governing authority provides for grievance and due process resolution procedures.• The governing authority meets regularly and has clearly defined policies regarding open attendance at meetings and executive sessions.• The governing authority has established process policies that set forth the style and rules by which the governing authority will complete its tasks and processes.• Governance policies are determined at official meetings and recorded in the minutes, including appropriate updates | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• BOCE Policy Manual• Board of Ed. Interview • BOCE Policy Manual• Board of Ed. Interview• Church Council Meeting Minutes • BOCE Policy Manual• Board of Ed. Interview• Church Council Meeting Minutes | 3 | 2 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | <p>and changes to policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minutes are recorded for each meeting and circulated to all members. ● Governing authority policies are collected into a policy manual, separate from the minutes. ● The governing authority makes appropriate reports to the operating organization(s). ● Neither the governing authority nor its individual members involve themselves in the day-to-day operations of the school. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board of Ed Interview - President shares verbal reports to Church Board ● Board of Ed Interview | | |
| <p>3A:05 Governing authority policy supports effective personnel.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written policy delineates roles and responsibilities of the board or governing authority. ● Comprehensive job responsibilities and/or limitations are in place for the administrator. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SJL Constitution ● BOCE Policy Manual ● BOCE Policy Manual ● Narrative | <p>3</p> | <p>2</p> |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|--|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The governing authority evaluates the head administrator annually based on the job description. ● The governing authority receives reports from the administrator at each meeting. ● The governing authority has written policies or position descriptions clearly delineating relationships between the head administrator and pastor(s). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Narrative ● Interview | | |
| <p>3A:06 Governing authority members meet prescribed qualifications and are trained regarding roles and responsibilities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written policies define qualifications for board or governing authority members. ● Governing authority members are required to participate in professional development regarding roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its individual members. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Constitution ● BOE Policy Handbook | 3 | 2 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|---|--|-------------------|-------------|
| <p>3A:07 The governing authority establishes and employs systematic planning for school improvement.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The governing authority has a process in place for evaluating the effectiveness of the school that includes a needs-assessment process integral to school-wide systematic planning. ● Long-range goals or desired outcomes are developed from the planning process. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BOE Interview | 3 | 2 |
| <p>3A:08 The governing authority provides strong financial leadership for the school.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The board or governing authority establishes policies that provide for sound budget planning and fiscal operations. ● The board or governing authority approves the budget (including annual tuition and fees) for the school or has developed policies to empower individuals with that responsibility. ● The board or governing authority accepts, reviews and devises strategies to react to concerns expressed in the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board of Ed. Interview | 3 | 2 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | annual financial audit. | | | |
| <p>3B:02 The administrator meets qualifications required for the position.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The principal is a member of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, Rostered or eligible for Roster status. ● The administrator holds active membership in the congregation supporting the school and is regular in Church attendance and Bible study. ● The administrator holds current, appropriate state certification or is actively working toward obtaining required certification. ● The administrator has a master’s degree in education, with no fewer than 12 semester hours in administration or supervision or is actively working toward such a degree. (The administrator of an early childhood center has a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SLED ● Split job ● Interview | 2 | 2 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | bachelor’s degree, with no fewer than 18 semester hours in early childhood education, or is actively working toward accomplishing this requirement.) | | | |
| 3B:03 The administrator is provided adequate support to complete required tasks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Release time is provided for administrative duties for the school’s primary administrator. ● The school administrator is released from teaching duties for at least one-fourth of each day for every 50 students enrolled. (If administrative duties are shared, then release time may be shared.) ● Secretarial assistance is available for school purposes for at least one-fourth of each school day for every 50 students enrolled. ● In a school with more than 200 students, an | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Region 4 meetings ● Church and School share a secretary. | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|--|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | individual is designated as assistant administrator with associated administrative duties. | | | |
| 3B:04 The administrator is an effective communicator. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The administrator communicates frequently and regularly with pastor(s) and teachers individually and collectively. ● The administrator communicates effectively and frequently with families and students of all ages. ● A wide variety of venues both personal (one-to-one) and public are regularly used to facilitate effective communication. ● The administrator regularly spends a significant percentage of time listening, observing and speaking with parents, students and teachers. ● The administrator effectively | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Morning Prayer Circle ● Interview ● Interview with Grandparent and Staff ● Observation ● Email and physical presence at | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | <p>communicates and works together with local public school officials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administrator compiles such policies, procedures or practices as appropriate for effective communication to the various school communities into student and/or parent handbooks/manuals. | <p>Fairmont Public School District meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Handbook | | |
| <p>3B:05 The administrator is engaged in the process of developing and managing the budget.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administrator is involved in developing and managing the budget, including expenditures. The administrator has overall responsibility to assure that the budget is managed responsibly, using generally accepted bookkeeping procedures and safeguards. The administrator provides leadership in securing funds and resources, which may include individual, private, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BOEC Policy Manual Church Financial Report Board of Ed. Interview School Financial Report Narrative | <p>2</p> | <p>2</p> |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|--|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | <p>corporate, and/or governmental sources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funds provided by auxiliary organizations are allocated per governing board policy, in consultation with the school administrator and regularly audited. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School Financial Report | | |
| <p>3B:06 The administrator is committed to personal development and the development of staff members.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The administrator provides spiritual leadership for the school community and in the congregation(s) through word and example. ● The administrator is a member of professional organizations. ● The administrator provides leadership in curriculum development, staff development, congregational service, public relations, student evaluation and other school-related activities. ● Levels of responsibility and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pastor Interview ● Teacher Interview ● LEA | 2 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|---|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | <p>accountability are clearly defined. The administrator provides leadership for implementation of current educational technology, including necessary staff development and training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administrator engages in an ongoing program of professional staff supervision. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Interview Head of School Head Teacher | | |
| Total | | | 27 | 23 |
| Standard Three Overall Rating (Total ÷ 10, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth) | | | 2.7 | 2.3 |

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 3? 2.3

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

- 3A:04** The rating was changed from a 3 to a 2 because the team believes the BOCE Policy manual needs to be updated to coincide with their current process and procedures, and they put into practice written minutes that are stored in the school office from their meetings.
- 3A:05** The rating was changed from a 3 to a 2 because the team believes the BOCE needs to routinely evaluate the head administrator and the shared responsibility of the administrator and the pastor at this time.
- 3A:06** The rating was changed from a 3 to a 2 because the team believes the BOCE should receive training as to the duties and responsibilities of their board.
- 3A:07** - There is no process in place for evaluating the effectiveness of the school that leads to long-range goals and school wide systemic planning.

- **3A:08** The rating was changed from a 3 to a 2 because the team believes the BOCE should be more involved with the budgeting of the school and making sure that the annual audit takes place.
- **3B:06** - The rating was changed from a 2 to a 3 because the team believes that between the Board of Education, the Head of School, and the Head Teacher, supervision of teachers is informally being done.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?

- The working relationship between Head of School and the Head Teacher are very strong and have a very positive impact on this School community and leadership.
- The communication between home and school is very strong.
- The fact that the Head of School is currently working through the SLED program is a strength to this school community and his ability to continue to lead the school.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?

- **3A:04** The Board of Christian Education needs to update and review the manual that they operate under.
- **3A:04** - Meeting minutes are not readily available at the primary office of St. James Lutheran Church and School.
- **3B:02** In the future of the school, when hiring a principal they should hold the proper certification. While the current arrangement of the Head of School and Head Teacher split responsibilities of administrator seems to be working quite well, neither meets the requirement of holding a masters degree in education nor state administrative licensure.
- **3B:03** - Administrative position is held in a special situation between two people. Neither have release time from their respective “main” responsibility. Pastor is likely overworked with responsibilities.
- **3B:05** - The school administrator is not involved in the development of the school budget

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?

- **3A:04 - Minnesota Statute 317A.461 Subdivision 1** (Articles and bylaws; minutes) states that non-profit corporations “shall keep at its **registered office** correct and complete copies of its articles and bylaws, accounting records, voting agreements, and minutes of meetings of members, board of directors, and committees having any of the authority of the board of directors for the last six years.” Alternatively, under Subd. 6, computerized records may be utilized. The boards and committees of St. James Lutheran Church and School will return to this required practice under Minnesota law.
- **3A:06** - Complete regular professional development regarding duties, roles and responsibilities for new and ongoing board members.

- **3A:07** - Develop a regular, ongoing process of evaluating the effectiveness of the school that includes a needs-assessment process. From this process or another process, develop long range desired outcomes that become a strategic plan for your school and congregation.
- **3A:08** - Complete an annual financial audit or review by an outside source
- **3B:02** - The school administrator should have or be working towards a master's in education and have or be working towards state administrative licensure.

Please list all Validation Team concerns that the school must add to their Final School Action Plan for Standard 3:

3A:04 - Board of Education meetings will follow **Minnesota Statute 317A.461 Subdivision 1** (Articles and bylaws; minutes).

Standard 4: Professional Personnel

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 4 prepared and in good order?

Standard 4 Required Evidence*: School's staff development plan

YES

NO

Standard 4 Required Evidence*: Non-discriminatory salary and benefit scale or policy

YES

NO

Standard 4 Required Evidence*: MinistrySafe Training for all school employees, coaches, sponsors (encouraged to have all volunteers also trained)

YES

NO

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 4?

4:01* All school personnel express and demonstrate agreement with the stated school purpose.

YES

NO

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|------------------------------|------------------------|--|-------------------|-------------|
|------------------------------|------------------------|--|-------------------|-------------|

| | | Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p>4:02 Christ-centered teachers have qualities and qualifications necessary for success in their defined areas of service.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All teachers demonstrate a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a dedication to teaching in the Lutheran school. Full-time faculty members are on the Roster of the LCMS, eligible to be on the Roster of the LCMS or are actively enrolled in the colloquy or Seminar Program through the Concordia University Education Network (CUEnet). Teachers have been prepared and vetted following prescribed federal and state mandates for background checks and training. Full-time professional staff members have appropriate teaching certificate(s) from the state and meet requirements for their specific assignments. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching licenses Interview | 2 | 2 |
| <p>4:03 Teachers are informed of, and subsequently evaluated and supported in the continuing pursuit of professional growth and development.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs for teacher supervision/evaluation/growth have been adopted and are implemented by the administrator. Teachers engage in professional development, including spiritual development and are accountable for implementation that supports student learning. Teachers attend workshops, conferences, seminars and training appropriate to their position and discipline. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at LEA Conferences and P.D. events Narrative | 2 | 2 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|----------|----------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LCMS Rostered teachers are provided opportunities to attend LCMS events. ● Teachers hold membership in professional organizations. ● The school provides opportunity, training and support so that teachers may effectively and appropriately engage technology in classroom instruction. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher Profile (1) ● Observation ● Narrative | | |
| <p>4:04 Teachers and support staff are empowered and equipped to effectively accomplish their assigned task.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New teachers receive thorough orientation and are supported with experienced, assigned teaching mentors. ● Teachers demonstrate and continuously improve knowledge and skills necessary for effective instruction and modeling of Christ-centered values. ● Policies related to teachers and support staff are established and practiced. ● The average student-professional personnel ratio is appropriate for the age and level of the students and ensures optimal student growth. ● The number of staff members is adequate to provide effective instruction and supervision for students at all school activities. ● The nondiscriminatory salary and benefit scale is adopted and implemented for all personnel. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MN South District events ● Observation ● Narrative ● Teacher Handbook ● Observation ● Narrative ● Observation ● District Pay Scale with cost of living raise ● Board of Ed Interview | <p>3</p> | <p>3</p> |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|-----|-----|
| <p>4:05 Employees and volunteers serving in support roles have the qualifications and training necessary for success in their defined area of service.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support staff (e.g., teacher assistants, student teachers, nurse) meets state requirements for their specific assignments. ● Appropriate policies related to support staff are established and practiced. ● Adequate training for support staff is provided. ● Appropriate policies and training for volunteers are in place. ● Staff members understand and relate appropriately with students and their families. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Narrative ● Staff Profile ● Staff Handbook ● Volunteer Handbook ● Volunteer Handbook ● Volunteer Handbook ● Observation ● Interview | 3 | 3 |
| Total | | | 12 | 12 |
| Standard Four Overall Rating (Total ÷ 4, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth) | | | 3.0 | 3.0 |

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 4? 3.0

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?

- Communication and professional/personal support between teachers
- Continue to encourage and provide opportunities for teachers to attend conferences

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?

- **4:02** - Teachers are not all on the Roster of the LCMS or hold the appropriate degree for what they are teaching.

- **4:03** Teachers should be actively involved in professional development that supports the learning needs of the students they are serving.
- **4:05** - The Co-op schools need to formulate an agreement to ensure that all volunteers, coaches, have gone through the MinistrySafe training/background checks and proper training for the position they are accepting. Recommendation to have the school who is sponsoring the sport would be the responsible school for making sure those requirements are met.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?

Complete the reconstruction of the personnel files that were destroyed in the fire.

Please list all Validation Team concerns that the school must add to their Final School Action Plan for Standard 4:

Standard 5: Teaching and Learning

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 5 prepared and in good order?

Standard 5 Required Evidence*: Curriculum documentation is developed and implemented for every grade level for religion, mathematics, science, reading, language arts, social studies, world languages, art, music, physical education and any other subject taught. (Early childhood centers need not segment learner outcomes into specific subject areas.)

YES

NO

Standard 5 Required Evidence*: A current schedule is prepared for each classroom, indicating clearly when subjects (activities) are taught and during what periods.

YES

NO

Standard 5 Required Evidence*: Provide a chart illustrating the semester/yearly instructional minutes of all content offered, percentage of each school week allocated to each subject (activity), at each level, including a comparison with state guidelines (If your state does not have minute requirements, provide all other information and note there are no state requirements).

YES

NO

Standard 5 Required Evidence*: Analysis of the results of standardized tests administered for each grade level for the past three years, including a description of how this information is used to evaluate and improve student learning, is provided.

YES

NO

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 5?

5:01* The teaching of the Christian faith is recognized as the major purpose of the school, is allotted appropriate time in the daily schedule and is integrated intentionally throughout the curriculum and instruction.

YES

NO

5:02* Curriculum documentation is developed and provided for religion, mathematics, science, reading, language arts, social studies, world languages, art, music, physical education and any other subject taught by the school. (Early childhood centers need not segment learning outcomes into specific subject areas.)

YES

NO

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|--|-------------------|-------------|
| <p>5:03 The school community builds and maintains a vision, direction and focus for student learning.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school prepares students for the next level of education and life. ● The school aligns its goals, curriculum and measures to those of the next level so that students transition successfully. ● The school quantifies, tracks and publicly celebrates student success. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exit Interviews ● Share testing scores ● Scope & Sequence of Curriculum ● Narrative ● A.R. Goal recognition & rewards ● Newspaper article | <p>3</p> | <p>3</p> |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices used by teachers to ensure student success. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement plans for technology | | |
| <p>5:04 The school's Christ-centered, written curriculum provides challenging learning experiences and ensures that students have sufficient opportunities to develop life skills, critical thinking skills and applied learning.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The curriculum is aligned with delineated standards. The curriculum is documented, assessed, monitored and challenges all students. The curriculum reflects research, best practices and high standards in education and it is designed to ensure that every student receives Christ-centered, rigorous and sequential academic preparation. The curriculum is aligned with LCMS teachings. The curriculum ensures that students can pursue their | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Review Schedule Observation Narrative Teacher Interviews Interviews | 2 | 2 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|--|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | <p>God-given talents and passions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The curriculum is used as an opportunity to proclaim the Gospel. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview | | |
| <p>5:05 Teachers use a wide variety of instructional strategies that engage students and ensure mastery of learning expectations.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers implement classroom instructional strategies that provide students with the knowledge, creativity, skills and understanding to become problem solvers, decision makers and socially responsible global citizens. Classroom instruction involves a variety of strategies and settings that address diverse student needs and accommodate individual learning styles as fully as possible. Evidence of active student engagement exists in every classroom. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observations Student interviews Pictures Field Trips Chapels Observations Evidence Pictures | <p>3</p> | <p>3</p> |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service learning is a component of the school's required program. | | | |
| <p>5:06 Teachers intentionally communicate and collaborate to improve instruction and student learning.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers regularly participate in staff development activities designed to provide professional growth, improve instruction and enhance student learning. Teachers pursue opportunities to interact with colleagues seeking ways to improve. Teachers work together to share responsibility for student learning. Teachers regularly share content, resources, instructional techniques and management skills. School leaders empower teachers with time and resources that facilitate opportunities for communication and collaboration. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence CPR Interviews LEA Conferences Faculty Meetings Teacher Interviews Interviews School Calendar Head of School interview Head Teacher Interview Teacher interviews | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| <p>5:07 Technology enhances and enriches the students' learning environment.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Faculty members are users, instructors and participants in the process of engaging technology with the learning process in schools. ● Faculty members acquire the necessary technology skills to use personally and integrate and guide student learning. ● Clear and intentional planning and protocols for technology are in place. ● Technology enhances curriculum, instruction, assessment and is used by teachers to personalize, enhance and improve instruction. ● Student technology is monitored and filtered to promote appropriate integration of | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Smartboards ● Computer lab ● displays in classrooms ● Technology Class Schedule ● Observation ● Inservice ● Teacher Interviews ● Board Interviews ● School Calendar ● Parents Interview ● Student Surveys ● Parent Surveys | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | technology into the learning process. | | | |
| <p>5:08 Curriculum, instruction and assessment are regularly monitored and adjusted through the collection and analysis of data-driven information.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school monitors, reviews, evaluates and modifies its curriculum based on the use of school-wide student data that is generated by multiple tools and surveys. ● Multiple forms of student assessment drive instructional strategies. ● Student learning is monitored, tracked, recorded and reported regularly and continuously during the time the student is enrolled at the school. ● A comprehensive program that examines student achievement with frequent progress monitoring is used to individualize instruction for student success. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence Outline of Review ● Parent Surveys ● School Testing ● Parent Teachers ● Iowa Basic Testing ● Report Cards ● Parent Teachers Conferences ● IOWA Basic Testing ● Parent Interview ● Teacher Interview ● LSEM | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|------------------------|--|-------------------|-------------|
| Total | | | 17 | 17 |
| Standard Five Overall Rating (Total ÷ 6, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth) | | | 2.8 | 2.8 |

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 5? 2.8

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?

- LESM program in place and their partnership with Fairmont Public Schools
- Head of School communicates and empowers staff

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?

5:04 Curriculum needs to be documented and mapped out to benefit both current staff and future staff, as well as be able to share with parents as requested.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?

Seek out or create a Curriculum ‘template’ to utilize from grade to grade and content to content for consistency. Include ways in which you incorporate our faith/beliefs into the curriculum

Please list all Validation Team concerns that the school must add to their Final School Action Plan for Standard 5:

Standard 6: Student Services

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 6 prepared and in good order?

Standard 6 Required Evidence*: Enrollment / admission policy

YES

NO

Standard 6 Required Evidence*: Crisis emergency plan

YES

NO

Standard 6 Required Evidence*: MinistrySafe training certificates for all staff, coaches, activity sponsors, and volunteers working directly with students

YES

NO

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 6?

6:01* Services offered by the school meet or exceed federal, state and local requirements.

YES

NO

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------|
| <p>6:02 Admission policies, guidance services, behavior-management programs and ancillary services provide a protective framework of necessary support for students to successfully complete the school program.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student applicants are admitted per established written admission criteria. ● Permanent cumulative records for each student are maintained, stored and shared in compliance with state and federal law. ● The school administers and practices written procedures for addressing students' emotional, social and psychological needs. ● Procedures are established for evaluating students for promotion and/or graduation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Handbooks ● Website ● Observation ● Real Essentials ● IOWA Basic Testing results | 3 | 2 |
| <p>6:03 Extracurricular activities provide opportunities for students to further enhance God-given talents and abilities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school provides a variety of extracurricular activities that meet the needs and interests of the students and reflect the purpose of the school. ● Extracurricular activities are carefully | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sports Opportunities ● Participation in Sports Coop ● Chess Club ● Bike-a-Thon | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | <p>supervised by trained personnel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Those who supervise extracurricular activities accept the purpose of the school. ● Background checks are completed and on file for those who supervise extracurricular activities. | | | |
| <p>6:04 The school enacts a wide variety of policies and procedures that ensure the safety of each student and allow the school to comply with national, state and local mandates.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Immunization documentation, health tests and screenings conducted at the school conform with local and state laws. ● First-aid supplies are available and readily accessible to authorized personnel. ● Requirements for safety are conducted and recorded (i.e., fire, tornado, intruder and other drills). ● Plans are developed and implemented for blood-borne | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Health records ● Observations ● Observed ● Narrative ● Certificates of completed training for staff | <p>3</p> | <p>3</p> |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|---|---|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | <p>pathogen, asbestos, CPR, first-aid training and the distribution of medication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Background checks are conducted for all who have contact with students on a regular basis. ● Training for the recognition of child abuse and the protection of children is required for all who have contact with students on a regular basis. ● The school ensures the safety and security of its students when online. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Records in Church Office ● Certificates of Completion for staff (not digitally linked, but had a hard copy on site) | | |
| <p>6:05 School food services meet or exceed national and state guidelines.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Care is taken to ensure cleanliness where meals or snacks are consumed. ● Where food service is provided, adequate and qualified personnel are available to plan and serve a variety of | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observation in onsite visit ● health inspection ● Observation ● School Menus posted | <p>3</p> | <p>3</p> |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|--|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | well-balanced, wholesome meals in full accordance with federal guidelines. | | | |
| Total | | | 12 | 11 |
| Standard Six Overall Rating (Total ÷ 4, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth) | | | 3 | 2.75 |

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 6? 2.75

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

- **6:02** - This rating was changed due to the Admission Policy for the preschool class not aligning with state requirements for the number of hours present in the school building.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?

- The wide variety of meals offered on the school lunch menu and the quality and care in preparation of meals.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?

- **6:02** - Preschool students are staying beyond 4 hours per day beyond the license exempt rules allowed under Minnesota statutes.
- **6:04** - St. James should put into place a teacher monitored security program that will allow them to see student screens in live time.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?

Please list all Validation Team concerns that the school must add to their Final School Action Plan for Standard 6:

- Edit the admission policy for preschool aged students to comply with the Minnesota statutes.

Standard 7: Facilities

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 7 prepared and in good order?

Standard 7 Required Evidence*: School floor plan

YES

NO

Standard 7 Required Evidence*: School Crisis Management Plan (including evacuation and reunification plans)

YES

NO

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 7?

7:01* Facilities are well-maintained and free from hazards, providing a safe and productive learning environment.

YES

NO

7:02* Facilities fully conform to all applicable laws, including health, safety and building codes.

YES

NO

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (Please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------|
| <p>7:03 Buildings, grounds and equipment are well maintained, clean and appropriate for the age and number of students.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The size and design of the buildings and teaching/ learning areas are appropriate for the school’s programs and achievement of learner outcomes (objectives), meet state and local code requirements and provide for special needs. ● All teaching/ learning areas are properly ventilated, lighted and have adequate space for the number and size of the students. ● The buildings are cleaned daily and the restrooms are sanitary. ● School furniture is sufficient in quantity and age appropriate. ● The school administrator(s) participates in the supervision of those who maintain the physical facilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observation ● Observation ● Custodian Cleaning Schedule (Daily and Weekly) ● Observation | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (Please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|--|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adequate provisions exist for offices, area for students needing care, recreation, library/media center and space for small-group instruction. ● The school facility has appropriate technology infrastructure. | | | |
| <p>7:04 Physical facilities provide specific (crosses, signs, etc.) and non-specific (attractive, adequate, etc.) Christian witness to the community.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The buildings contain evidence that the school is a Lutheran Christian school. ● Christian banners, pictures and posters are displayed in the hallway, entryway, gymnasium and classrooms. ● A cross is hung in a prominent place. ● An outdoor sign provides evidence of a Lutheran Christian School to the community. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observation ● Signage & Posters ● Cross in classrooms ● Cross outside on building and cross (I-beam) sculpture ● Murals ● School logos | 3 | 3 |
| <p>7:05 The building and grounds provide a safe school environment.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policies and procedures are in place to maintain a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student Handbook ● Faculty Handbook | 3 | 3 |

| General Indicator of Success | Operational Benchmarks | Sources of Evidence (Please provide bulleted list utilizing: observation, Handbook, Interview, specific document, etc.) | Self-Study Rating | Team Rating |
|--|--|---|-------------------|-------------|
| | <p>safe school environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The playground, athletic field(s), and school grounds are properly supervised, safe and fenced when appropriate and needed. ● access to the facility, has locked entrances and is secure during normal school hours. ● Crossing guards, lanes and school speed zones are provided where needed. ● A safe, carefully supervised procedure for loading and unloading students in cars, buses and other vehicles is in effect. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observations ● Observation ● Doorbell ● School Zone signs ● Observation | | |
| Total | | | 9 | 9 |
| Standard Seven Overall Rating (Total ÷ 3, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth) | | | 3.0 | 3.0 |

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 7? 3.0

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?

The school is well maintained, clean, and has security necessary for the students and staff of the school.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?

Please list all Validation Team concerns that the school must add to their Final School Action Plan for Standard 7:

Review of the School Action Plan

As a school conducts its Self-Study process, it identifies areas needing improvement. These items are usually rated as **2 (Emerging)** showing that the condition is recognized as important by the school but is inconsistently or irregularly applied. It is not supported with sufficient practices, evidence or documentation and there is room for improvement in this area. A rating of **1 (Not Evident)** means there is observable conflict or deficiency with the condition at the school or that the school does not enact this condition.

Items that have been identified as **2 (Emerging)** or **1 (Not Evident)** require planned improvement actions. Over the course of the school's accreditation cycle, the items must be targeted (with a completion date), assigned, evaluated and completed. The School Action Plan is the organization's roadmap, guiding the improvement process during the school's accreditation cycle.

Certain items will be rated as **3 (Operational)**, and while the condition is in place and functionally supported and practiced, it may not always be fully enacted or easily evidenced in every aspect of the school program. The school functions acceptably in this area and the school is not required to develop ways to improve in this area.

In a narrative, please address the following aspects of the school action plan:

- What is the Validation Team's evaluation of the realistic attainability of the plan as a whole?
- Were any items not addressed in the School Action Plan that were identified by the school in its Self-Study Report?
- Does the team wish to target additional action items not identified by the school in its Self-Study Report?

St. James's Lutheran School has a long-standing commitment to Lutheran education in the Northrop community and a faculty that has a desire to serve, so we believe they should be able to embrace the suggestions given and reach to completing the goals set out before them. The strength of the church and school community has a foundation in their current Pastoral leadership. We do however feel that when putting their action plan into motion, they should look at yearly goals of attaining the tasks and spreading out the tasks to more than just the administration who are already taxed with other full-time responsibilities within the church and school.

The School Action Plan identified an after school program for families as being a benefit to the families, and that was not addressed in the Self-Study Report. This may have been listed as a reminder to themselves that when working to meet other goals, this could be an implementation tool for other plans.

Not addressed by the current School Action Plan, we would recommend a plan to assist the Board of Christian Education in revising their manual, receiving training, putting into practice Minnesota Statute 317A.461 Subdivision 1 (Articles and bylaws; minutes) and creating a long range plan for the school; including the evaluation of their mission and purpose. Admission policy revision for the preschool aged students, as outlined in the report should be addressed and acted upon immediately to follow the Minnesota statutes.