National Lutheran School Accreditation
Validation Team Report
Revised September 2022

Zion Lutheran School

Mayer, Minnesota

April 18-20, 2023

Barbra Kozisek - Captain

Kris Gustin

Rev. Mark Loder

Sean Martens

FOREWARD

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 **Zion Lutheran School**.

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

Zion 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 **Zion Lutheran School** and its sponsoring congregation, **Zion 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 **Zion 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,

Barbra Kozisek
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

Barbra Kozisek - Captain & Principal at St. Paul's in Prior Lake.

This is my 2nd year here. I previously served as Principal at St. Paul's in Fort Dodge, Iowa. Prior to that I was a school counselor in the public school for 12 years and taught high school for 5 years. I serve on the Executive Board for the LEA and am an adjunct professor for CUNE, teaching in their school counseling department. I have served on one other NLSA validation team and I am looking forward to learning more about Zion Lutheran School.

I am married to my husband Scott. He is a pastor in Garner, Iowa, where I live on the weekends. We have three grown children and one grandson.

Kris Gustin - Activities Director at Mayer Lutheran High School in Mayer, MN.

Prior to his current role, he also served as an English teacher and Director of Admissions. Kris has a Bachelor's Degree in Secondary Education English and a Masters in Educational Leadership, both from Crown College. He received his Colloquy in August of 2007. He also graduated from the School Leadership Development (SLED) program in 2018. He was trained in COGNIA (AdvancED) accreditation and is ELEOT certified. This is his second National Lutheran Schools Accreditation visit.

Pastor Mark Loder - St. James Lutheran Church and School

Pastor Loder has served St. James since Advent of 2015 (served as Pastor of St. John's, Winsted prior - 2009 - 15). In the Spring of 2019 Pastor Loder was asked to consider helping with administration at the school. He began serving as Lead Administrator in the fall of 2019. He and the Vicar also teach all the religion classes at St. James. Having that amount of involvement in the school allows for great relationships to be built with the students. Pastor Loder completed SLED training this past summer.

Other ministry service opportunities Pastor Loder in which Pastor Loder serves include being the 4th Vice President of the District, Zone Counselor for the Litchfield LWML, and a Synod/District Reconciler.

He is married to Molly and they have three homemade children (21, 19, and 19) and an adopted son (24). Pastor Loder enjoys cooking, the outdoors, the arts, reading, and going on dates with his bride.

Sean Martens - Assistant to the President - Education, Minnesota South District

Martens 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	29	40
Standard 3	28	40
Standard 4	11	16
Standard 5	17	24
Standard 6	12	16
Standard 7	8	12
Total	116	164
Average (total ÷ 41, rounded to hundredths decimal)	**2.83**	**4.00**

The Validation Team's Overall Impression of the School

Zion Lutheran School is a very welcoming and friendly school. They embrace visitors as if they were already part of their school. This is evident even in the town of Mayer itself. Both the town and the school have seen growth in the last twenty plus years. Their relationship with other churches and Lutheran schools is a benefit and creates a unified Lutheran school experience. Zion Lutheran school's outstanding strengths are in the area of relationships, leadership and academics.

Outstanding Strengths
- **Relationships:** Firstly, we found "The Credo on Christian Education" as one of their strengths. It ties everything together: the education, purpose and sub-purpose of the school and church. They are intentional about communicating this as their purpose. The faculty loves and cares for the students, parents and each other, evidenced by their intentional relationships, communication and support of each other and school families. The relationship between the congregation and the school seems to be very strong, as seen in the recent funding for an addition of three classrooms that will benefit the school for years to come.
- **Leadership:** Overall leadership is strong and was stated as such by the teachers and pastors. There is clear and adequate documentation of the overall function of leadership. New faculty and new families are provided a mentor upon being hired. Mentors are asked to check in on mentees and meet regularly. The principal periodically reminds mentors and mentees to meet. Faculty observations are held multiple times a year and in multiple fashions: scheduled, unscheduled, pop-in, etc. Feedback is provided annually to each faculty member. There was a strong consensus that the principal is a strong professional who sets high standards for the faculty and staff.
- **Academics:** The school has a strong academic curriculum that prepares its students for the future. The school has worked to identify gaps in its education and address those gaps. Instructional strategies, including enhancement through technology, are varied and address

different learning styles. Mayer Lutheran High school is a blessing, and the ability to work well together provides the students with a high school experience option. The public school counselor is an LCMS member, which is a strength and provides an opportunity for Christ-centered counseling.

Major Deficiencies

No major deficiencies were identified.

Accreditation Recommendation

We the members of the Validation Team recommend

Accreditation in Good Standing	X		Provisional Accreditation			Denying Accreditation	

for **Zion Lutheran School** of **Mayer, MN**

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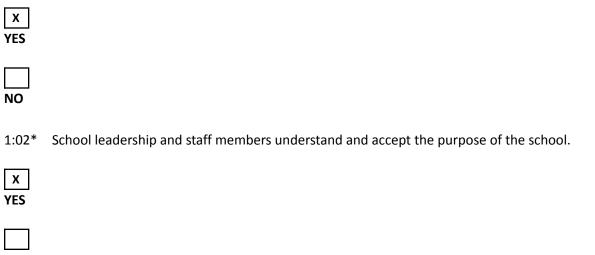
> **Not Evident (1) — There is observable conflict or deficiency with this indicator at the school.** A majority of the expected benchmarks are not met or addressed with sufficient practices, evidence or documentation. This rating may result in the assignment of Provisional Status. This must be addressed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

Standard 1: Purpose

The purpose/philosophy/mission statement serves as the basis for forming school goals, learner outcomes and actions plans, as well as determining a direction for all activities of the school. Throughout the Self-Study process, every area of the school program is evaluated to determine if each aligns with the stated purpose.

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

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NO

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

Standard 1 Required Evidence*: Written purpose/philosophy/mission statement

☒
YES

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NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
1:03 School leadership (administration and governing board) uses the mission statement as the foundation and reference for all planning.	● 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.	-Required response -Philosophy Statement & Ministry Covenant. -Interview -Stated in the Required Response & posted in various places in the church and school	3	3
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.	● 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.	-Staff meeting agenda in-service slides -Interview	3	3
1:05 The school's purpose is displayed and reflected in school activities and in the teaching/learning environment in classrooms.	● The school's purpose is displayed in each classroom and in the hallways. ● The school's purpose is readily seen on the school's website. ● The school's purpose is included in written communications	-Website -Mustang Memo -Handbooks -Photos -Interview	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	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.			
1:06 New employees are informed about the school's purpose and its appropriate engagement.	● New employees are given an orientation packet and have an orientation meeting with the school administrator. ● 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.	-New teacher orientation agenda -Mentor handbook -Job descriptions	3	2
Total			12	11
Standard One Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 4, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**			3	2.8

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

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NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?
1:06 The church and School Mission Statement was not outlined in the job descriptions as required.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?
The Credo ties everything together between the education, mission and values of the school and church. They are intentional about communicating their purpose.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
1:06 The church and School Mission Statement was not outlined in the job descriptions as required.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?
1:06 Add the Church and school's Mission Statement within the body of the Job Description - perhaps under Job Specifications.

Standard 2: Relationships

The Lutheran school has a special relationship with its operating congregation(s). The school concerns itself with the ministry of the whole church to fulfill its purpose as a Lutheran school. To do this, the school seeks opportunities to enhance relationships with the local congregation(s), its district and the national church body.

Note: Section 2 is divided into three categories: school and congregation, school and community and school climate. Section 2A, School and Congregation, does not apply when a Lutheran school is operating outside of a highly developed relationship with a single congregation or group of congregations.

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 Registered Service Organization (RSO) status with the Synod.

| X |
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.

| X |
YES

| |
NO

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

| X |
YES

| |
NO

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

Standard 2 Required Evidence*: Written nondiscrimination statement

☒
YES

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NO

Standard 2 Required Evidence*: School discipline code

☒
YES

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NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
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.	• 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.	- Faculty & Staff Start of Year Development - Faculty & Staff End of Year Development - Thursday morning devotion - Parent Partnership Workshop - Chapel Schedule - Confirmation Class - Pastors go into classroom	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
		- Staff Prayer Card - Prayer for all staff		
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.	● Students participate regularly in congregational life through planned activities available and coordinated with the congregation. ● School staff members are actively involved in worship and congregational life in their parish. ● 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.	-choir schedule -staff information sheets -National Youth Gathering -Acolyte -Chapel offerings go to missions determined by the school every year. -Evangelism plan for Zion Lutheran Church -Staff information Sheet.	3	3
2B:02 The school's student population reflects the ethnic, racial and economic diversity of the community in which it is located.	● 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 surrounding community. ● The school has developed ways to enroll students from the community who	-Demographic data -Community events -Board policy -Tuition Assistance policy	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	do not have the economic resources to support tuition-driven enrollment.			
2B:03 The school promotes and encourages the involvement of its teachers and students in community activities.	● 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.	-Staff information sheets -Mustang Memo -Service events examples (10+)	3	3
2B:04 The school has an active Parent-Teacher Organization and/or other parent support groups.	● The school sponsors educational opportunities for parents and provides a wide variety of parenting resources. ● 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.	-Back to School Parent Meeting -PTL handbook -Parent Partnership -Workshops -Book fair -Mustang Memo Articles	3	3
2B:05 The school is known, respected and maintains a positive perception in its community.	● The school is known and respected in its community. ● The school regularly and frequently shares information with its constituents.	-Newspaper articles -Facebook page -website -Mustang memo -classroom newsletters	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	● Good relationships exist with the local public schools. ● School facilities are available, when practical, for use by appropriate community groups and activities.	-facility rental policy -Title I teacher email		
2C:02 The school's Christ-centered ethos is visible and evident to visitors.	● 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 teaching/learning environment.	-Mission statement. -Respect poster. Kindness -Poster & Self control Poster. -Interviews with the pastors and administrator -Devotions daily -Chapel Weekly -Observed -Reiterated in class and chapel through the posters, fellowship and hymns	3	3
2C:03 Teachers and staff members recognize, value and respect the needs of students.	● Teachers demonstrate love for all students in Christ.	-Respect, self-control and kindness posters. -Bible verses supporting the	3	2

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	● 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 self-control out of love for Christ. ● When **desirable** and practical, students are given the opportunity to participate in making school decisions.	above and prayer sheets. -Prayer sheets are a great way for -students to ask for prayers and pray for one another. -Bible verses in each subject. -Observed -Interviews -Discipline policies are heavily law. No forgiveness seen and past sins are always recorded. -Observed in the visit -The above Posters support this. -No Student Council so decisions are made by checking in with students.		
2C:04 School personnel model Christ's love in their relationships with parents and guardians.	● School personnel are approachable and receptive to parental questions or concerns. ● Parents are viewed by teachers as school partners in the education process.	-PTL involvement -Monthly Newsletter -Use of Fast Direct for communication	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	● 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. ● The legal rights of parents and legal guardians are protected. ● Parents are encouraged to be positive and supportive of the school.	-Board policies regarding parent communication -Grandparents Day -Lunch with someone special opportunities -Interviews		
2C:05 Faculty and administration respect and support one another as individual, fellow members of the body of Christ.	● 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.	-Longevity of staff, daily devotions -Staff talk highly of each other	3	3
Total			30	29
Standard Two Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 10, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**			3.0	2.9

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 2? 2.9

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

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YES

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NO

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

Law and Gospel are not balanced in regard to discipline. The Gospel is not reflected in the policy. Forgiveness and repentance is not evident in the discipline policy.

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

Overall the church - school relationship is strong. The raising of funds for an addition is evidence of this. Mayer Lutheran High school is a blessing and the ability to work well together is a great strength.

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

2A:02 The relationship between St. Mark and Zion is regularly negotiated and contracted but does not seem to be treated as an association model. St. Mark has a first-year pastor who is expected to teach at Zion for 3 classes a week and ⅓ of all of the chapels and faculty Bible studies. His call paperwork did not mention anything about a school. Zion's school evangelism plan does include an outreach opportunity for St. Mark. Additionally, the teaching staff member funded by St. Mark will soon retire, leaving additional questions about the partnership when calling another worker.

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

2A:02 Allow flexibility in adjusting the relationship between St. Mark and Zion, taking into consideration the gifts and experience of current and future workers. Consider formalizing the partnership into an association model.

2C:03 We recommend that the school's discipline policy be reviewed. To include opportunities for grace, conflict resolution and reconciliation.

Standard 3: Leadership

Leadership of the school is a major factor in the successful development, implementation and evaluation of the school. Leadership is provided by a variety of groups and people. Two primary leadership components are the board or governing authority and the appointed administrator(s), although some schools may function effectively without a school board. In that case, Section 3A: Governance, would not apply.

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.

[x] **YES**

[ ] **NO**

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

[x] **YES**

[ ] **NO**

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

[x] **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.

[x] **YES**

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NO

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

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NO

Standard 3 Required Evidence*: Administrator's job description

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YES

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NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
3A:04 The governing authority is organized around written policy and understands and operates within its role and function.	● 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	- Policy 1400 - Due Process Parent - School Handbook - Yearly Calendar - Policy 1104 - Board Role and Function - Policy 1105 - Board Responsibilities - Policy 1106 - Annual Goals - Policy 1200 - Policy Information - Policy 1205 - Board Meeting Procedures - Visitors - Board Minutes - Voter's Report - School Administrator's Report	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	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 and changes to policy. ● 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.			

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
3A:05 Governing authority policy supports effective personnel.	● Written policy delineates roles and responsibilities of the board or governing authority. ● Comprehensive job responsibilities and/or limitations are in place for the administrator. ● 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).	- Policy 1104 - Board Role and Function - Policy 1105 - Board Responsibilities - Policies 1202-4 - Board Officer Duties - Policy 1300B - School Administrator - School Admin. Evaluation - School Admin. Report Interview	3	3
3A:06 Governing authority members meet prescribed qualifications and are trained regarding roles and responsibilities.	● Written policies define qualifications for board or governing authority members. ● Governing authority members are required to participate in	- Constitution and ByLaws - Policy 1201 - Board Membership - Professional Development Presentation	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	professional development regarding roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its individual members.			
3A:07 The governing authority establishes and employs systematic planning for school improvement.	● 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.	- Annual Parent Survey - Policy 1106 - Annual Goals	3	3
3A:08 The governing authority provides strong financial leadership for the school.	● 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.	- 2022/23 Budget - Yearly Calendar Interview	2	2

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Stud y Rating	Team Rating
	• The board or governing authority accepts, reviews and devises strategies to react to concerns expressed in the annual financial audit.			
3B:02 The administrator meets qualifications required for the position.	• 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	- Rostered Status - Teaching License - BoSM Letter - SLED Certification - Van Lunen Program Participant - Masters in History Interview	2	2

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Stud y Rating	Team Rating
	administrator of an early childhood center has a 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.	● 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	- Policy 1300B - School Administrator - Policy 1300C - Dean of Education - Policy 1300L - Admin. Secretary - Policy 1300M - Office Assistant	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	individual is designated as assistant administrator with associated administrative duties.			
3B:04 The administrator is an effective communicator.	● 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 communicates and works together with	- Faculty Bulletin - Parent Email - NLSW Message - Mustang Memo - Public School Emails - School Handbook - Teacher Observations and Evaluations	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	local public school officials. ● 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.			
3B:05 The administrator is engaged in the process of developing and managing the budget.	● 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, corporate, and/or governmental sources.	- 2022/23 Budget - Expenditure History - Region II Comparison - Powerpoint Presentation - Requisition Request Form - Donation Request Letter - Auction for Education Documentation - Walk-A-Thon Documentation	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	● Funds provided by auxiliary organizations are allocated per governing board policy, in consultation with the school administrator and regularly audited.			
3B:06 The administrator is committed to personal development and the development of staff members.	● 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 accountability are clearly defined. The administrator provides leadership for implementation of current	- Devotions - Membership in LEA, Minndependent, ASCD - Van Lunen Fellows Participant - Minndependent Conference Participation - Faculty Development - Faculty Book Assignments - Faculty Article - Classroom Observations	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	educational technology, including necessary staff development and training.			
	● The administrator engages in an ongoing program of professional staff supervision.			
Total			28	28
Standard Three Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 10, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**			2.8	2.8

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 3? 28/2.8

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?
Communication with the staff, parents, and administration is quite strong.
Overall leadership is strong and was stated as such by the teachers.
There is clear and adequate documentation of the overall function of leadership.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
3A:08 - Zion currently does not use an external financial review or audit.
3B:02 - The administrator has a masters but not in education nor 12 semester hours in administration

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?
3A:08 - Seek an external financial review or financial audit.
3B:02 - The administrator works towards his administrators license or 12 credit hours in administration.

Standard 4: Professional Personnel

Maintaining a qualified and competent staff is an essential quality related to an accredited Lutheran school. The performance of the instructional, administrative and auxiliary personnel, functioning as a unit, should reflect the stated philosophy and objectives of the school.

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

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

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
4:02 Christ-centered teachers have qualities and qualifications necessary for success in	● All teachers demonstrate a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a dedication	-Staff Information Sheets -Teaching Certificates -Teacher Survey -Bible Study	2	2

their defined areas of service.	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 program. ● 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.	-Observed		
4:03 Teachers are informed of, and subsequently evaluated and supported in the continuing pursuit of professional growth and development.	● 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. ● LCMS Rostered teachers are provided opportunities to attend LCMS events. ● Teachers hold membership in professional organizations.	*Staff Information Sheets *TEC 21 *Faculty Development Meetings *Teacher Self-evaluations *Teacher Observations *Faculty interview	3	3

	● The school provides opportunity, training and support so that teachers may effectively and appropriately engage technology in classroom instruction.			
4:04 Teachers and support staff are empowered and equipped to effectively accomplish their assigned task.	● 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.	-New Teacher Orientation -Staff Handbook -Back to school agendas -Mentors -Job Descriptions -Board Policies -Faculty interviews	3	3
4:05 Employees and volunteers serving in support roles have the qualifications and training necessary for success in their defined area of service.	● Support staff (e.g., teacher assistants, student teachers, nurse) meets state requirements for their specific assignments.	*Volunteer Guidelines *Teacher Aide Instructions *Staff Handbook *Board Policies *CPR/First Aid Training *Parent Survey Results	3	3

34

	● 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.	*Student Survey Results		
Total		11	11
Standard Four Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 4, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**		2.8	2.8

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 4? 2.8

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

☐
YES

☒ X
NO

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

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?
New faculty is provided a mentor upon being hired. Mentors are asked to check in on mentees and meet regularly. The principal periodically reminds mentors and mentees to meet.

Faculty observations are held multiple times a year and in multiple fashions: scheduled, unscheduled, pop-in, etc. Feedback is provided annually to each faculty member.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
4:02 Three faculty members are not eligible to be rostered or enrolled in the colloquy program.

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

4:02 The school should employ faculty that is eligible to be rostered by the LCMS. Faculty members who are not eligible to be rostered should be required to enroll and complete the colloquy program within a reasonable period of time, with the support of the congregation

Standard 5: Teaching and Learning

Student learning requires the integration of a well-developed curriculum and instructional design supported by intentional and ongoing assessment. When teaching, learning and assessment are correctly aligned and students are engaged, learning results. In this way, Lutheran schools accomplish one of their primary objectives.

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*   The written curriculum is developed and is implemented for religion, mathematics, science, reading, language arts, social studies, 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

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

Standard 5 Required Evidence*: Written curriculum is developed for every grade level for religion, mathematics, science, reading, language arts, social studies, 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*: A chart is prepared illustrating the percentage of each school week allocated to each subject (activity), at each level, including a comparison with state guidelines.

☒
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

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NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Stud y Rating	Team Rating
5:03 The school community builds and maintains a vision, direction and focus for student learning.	• 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	*MAP Results *Honor Roll *Communication with Lutheran high school *Writing Class *Faculty Conversations	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	transition successfully. ● The school quantifies, tracks and publicly celebrates student success. ● School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices used by teachers to ensure student success.			
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.	● 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.	*Curriculum *Credo of Christian Education *Faculty Conversations	3	2

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	● The curriculum is aligned with LCMS teachings. ● The curriculum ensures that students can pursue their God-given talents and passions. ● The curriculum is used as an opportunity to proclaim the Gospel.			
5:05 Teachers use a wide variety of instructional strategies that engage students and ensure mastery of learning expectations.	● 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	*Writing Assignments *Decision Makers *Individual Learning Styles assignments *SEL Debate *Faculty Conversations	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	styles as fully as possible. ● Evidence of active student engagement exists in every classroom. ● Service learning is a component of the school's required program.			
5:06 Teachers intentionally communicate and collaborate to improve instruction and student learning.	● 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	*Faculty Development Plan *Technology Inservice *Writing Curriculum *Mentors *Class Management Strategies *Budget *Faculty Conversations	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	facilitate opportunities for communication and collaboration.			
5:07 Technology enhances and enriches the students' learning environment.	● 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 is integral to curriculum, instruction, assessment and a tool for teachers to personalize, enhance and improve instruction. ● Student technology skills are sharpened and advanced through the integration of	*Technology Use Policy *Chromebook Rules *Recorded Class *TEC21 *Classroom assignments with technology present *Faculty Conversations *Parent Conversations	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	technology into the learning process.			
5:08 Curriculum, instruction and assessment are regularly monitored and adjusted systematically in response to multiple assessments of student learning and examination of professional practice.	● 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.	*MAPS reports *Report Cards *Student Records *Classroom Assessments *SAXON Math Placement *Faculty Conversations	3	3
Total			18	17
Standard Five Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 6, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**			3	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?
The curriculum documents provided lack two essential things. First, the curriculum is not aligned to any delineated standards. Second, the curriculum does not contain any evidence of the Christ-centered approach or any evidence that it is grounded in Scripture and used as an opportunity to proclaim the Gospel.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?
The school has a strong academic curriculum that prepares its students for the future. The school has worked to identify gaps in its education and address those gaps. Instructional strategies, including enhancement through technology, are varied and address different learning styles.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
The curriculum documents provided lack two essential things. First, the curriculum is not aligned to any delineated standards. Second, the curriculum does not contain any evidence of the Christ-centered approach or any evidence that it is grounded in Scripture and used as an opportunity to proclaim the Gospel.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?
5.04 The school should review the curriculum and align it with delineated standards and incorporate your school's purpose of Sharing Hope, Reaching Christ into the curriculum. The Credo on Christian Education should flow into and be infused within your curriculum.

Standard 6: Student Services

Lutheran schools provide student services that support and enrich the educational experience of each student. Some of these services in this section are required by state or federal mandate. The school may choose to provide others to promote the training of the whole child. It is important that these programs are run efficiently and enhance the overall image of the school in its community.

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.

| X |
YES

| |
NO

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

Standard 6 Required Evidence*: Enrollment / admission policy

| X |
YES

| |
NO

Standard 6 Required Evidence*: Crisis emergency plan

| X |
YES

| |
NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
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.	● 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.	In a locked filing cabinet Staff trained in SEL -BoSM Policy 2100 - Admissions Policy -BoSM Policy 2102 - Entrance by Transfer -BoSM Policy 2103 - Grade Level Advancement Policy -BoSM Policy 2107 - -Retention policies -Records in locked File Cabinet -MLHS Counselor provided -Student Care -RESPECT, Kindness, & Self-Control	3	3
6:03 Extracurricular activities provide opportunities for students to further enhance God-given talents and abilities.	● 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	Background checks are complete and done a variety of extra-curricular and athletic activities are available to the students.	3	

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General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	supervised by trained personnel. ● Those who supervise extracurricular activities accept the purpose of the school. ● Background checks are completed and on file for those who supervise extracurricular activities.			
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.	● 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 pathogen, asbestos, CPR,	CPR training done August of 2022 Immunizations in their narrative Drill list chart -Beginning of School Year Faculty Meetings -First-aid supplies located in office -First-aid packet located in each classroom -Medication Distribution -Background Checks -Drill List	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	first-aid training and the distribution of medication. ● 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.			
6:05 School food services meet or exceed national and state guidelines.	● 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 well-balanced, wholesome meals in full accordance	-Sinks and disinfecting wipes in each classroom -Health Inspection -Health License -Certified Food Protection -Manager Certification -Food Safety Training Certification -Lunch Menu	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Stud y Rating	Team Rating
	with federal guidelines.			
Total			12	12
Standard Six Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 4, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**			3	3

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 6? 3

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

☐
YES

☒ X
NO

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

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?
Public school counselor is an LCMS member.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
6:04   There is a strong need in the community for preschool-aged children to stay beyond the 4-hour maximum time limit allowed under Minnesota Statute 245A.03-26i.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?
6:04   Preschool **will follow** exempt state guidelines with a 4-hour maximum time limit per day and no more than 20 children allowed per class (MN 245A.03-26i) and/or consider any of the following:
   A. Obtain licensing for the preschool and/or extended day program.
   B. Partner with an outside licensed agency to provide extended care services.
   C. Drop Preschool.

Standard 7: Facilities

The Lutheran school's physical facilities include the buildings, land, equipment, maintenance of the property and provisions for health, safety and sanitation. The school is both a place and instrument for learning. As a place for learning, the facilities help children grow spiritually, physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. As an instrument used in the learning process, the facilities demonstrate principles of beauty, harmony, order and utility. Its furnishings and décor are reflective of the Christian mission and purpose of the school.

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

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

Standard 7 Required Evidence*: School floor plan

☒
YES

☐
NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
7:03 Buildings, grounds and equipment are well maintained, clean and appropriate for the age and number of students.	● 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. ● Adequate provisions exist for offices, area for	Policy 2302 Observed Observed Observed Yes, per administrator Floor plan complete	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	students needing care, recreation, library/media center and space for small-group instruction. ● The school facility supports and provides for the integration of technology and learning.	Smart boards & Chromebooks		
7:04 Physical facilities provide specific (crosses, signs, etc.) and non-specific (attractive, adequate, etc.) Christian witness to the community.	● The Christian flag flies alongside the American flag at the same entrance. ● 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 is a witness to the community.	Observed Many Crosses in the building Observed	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
7:05 The building and grounds provide a safe school environment.	● Policies and procedures are in place to maintain a safe school environment. ● The playground and athletic field have fences or other restraints to prevent students from entering streets or adjoining property and to prevent vehicular traffic during school hours. ● The school limits 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.	-General Expectations in School Handbook -Entrance Door Signs - -Main & Drop off/pick up -Pictures of Speed Zone with fence & Slow Green Men & Morning Drop Off -School Administrator supervises drop off and pick up - observation	3	2
Total			9	8
Standard Seven Overall Rating (Total ÷ 3, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)			3	2.66

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 7? 2.66

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?
7:05 The outdoor play area is not fenced off from the adjoining property, which includes a body of water.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?
The support shown by the congregation and school community for the addition of 3 classrooms

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
7:05 Second Street is not marked with crosswalk lines on the street although students cross the street every Wednesday to attend chapel.
7:05 The outdoor play area is not fenced off from the adjoining property, which includes a body of water.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?
7:05 Install fencing around the outdoor play area and consider a dedicated, separated space for preschool.

7:05 Consider approaching the City Authorities to mark Second Street with crosswalk lines.

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?

Below is the recommended school action plan. The validation team feels this action plan as a whole is attainable and will continue to make Zion Lutheran School a better place for children to grow in their faith as well as their education while maintaining a safe environment. The school action plan and the self study report support each other and all items are addressed in both. The validation team does NOT wish to target any additional action items.

Action Plan

Standard 1

Concern

1:06 The church and School Mission Statement was not outlined in the job descriptions as required.

recommendation

Add the Church and school's Mission Statement within the body of the Job Description - perhaps under Job Specifications.

Standard 2

Concern

Law and Gospel are not balanced in regard to discipline. The Gospel is not reflected in the policy. Forgiveness and repentance is not evident in the discipline policy.

recommendation

2C:03 We recommend that the school's discipline policy be reviewed. To include opportunities for grace, conflict resolution and reconciliation.

Concern

2A:02 The relationship between St. Mark and Zion is regularly negotiated and contracted but does not seem to be treated as an association model. St. Mark has a first-year pastor who is expected to teach at Zion for 3 classes a week and ⅓ of all of the chapels and faculty Bible studies. His call paperwork did not mention anything about a school. Zion's school evangelism plan does include an outreach opportunity for St. Mark. Additionally, the teaching staff member funded by St. Mark will soon retire, leaving additional questions about the partnership when calling another worker.

Recommendation

2A:02 Allow flexibility in adjusting the relationship between St. Mark and Zion, taking into consideration the gifts and experience of current and future workers. Consider formalizing the partnership into an association model.

Standard 3

concern

3A:08 - Zion currently does not use an external financial review or audit.

recommendation

3A:08 - Seek an external financial review or financial audit.

concern

3B:02 - The administrator has a masters but not in education nor 12 semester hours in administration

recommendation

3B:02 - The administrator works towards his administrators license or 12 credit hours in administration.

Standard 4

concern

4:02 Three faculty members are not eligible to be rostered or enrolled in the colloquy program.

recommendation

4:02 The school should employ faculty that is eligible to be rostered by the LCMS. Faculty members who are not eligible to be rostered should be required to enroll and complete the colloquy program within a reasonable period of time, with the support of the congregation

Standard 5

concern

The curriculum documents provided lack two essential things. First, the curriculum is not aligned to any delineated standards. Second, the curriculum does not contain any evidence of the Christ-centered approach or any evidence that it is grounded in Scripture and used as an opportunity to proclaim the Gospel.

recommendation

5.04 The school should review the curriculum and align it with delineated standards and incorporate your school's purpose of Sharing Hope, Reaching Christ into the curriculum. The Credo on Christian Education should flow into and be infused within your curriculum.

Standard 6

concern

6:04   There is a strong need in the community for preschool-aged children to stay beyond the 4 hour maximum time limit allowed under Minnesota Statute 245A.03-26i.

recommendation

6:04   Preschool **will follow** exempt state guidelines with a 4 hour maximum time limit per day and no more than 20 children allowed per class (MN 245A.03-26i) and/or consider any of the following:
    A. Obtain licensing for the preschool and/or extended day program.
    B. Partner with an outside licensed agency to provide extended care services.
    C. Drop Preschool.

Standard 7

concern

7:05 The outdoor play area is not fenced off from the adjoining property, which includes a body of water.

Recommendation

7:05 Install fencing around the outdoor play area and consider a dedicated, separated space for preschool.

concern

7:05 Second Street is not marked with crosswalk lines on the street although students cross the street every Wednesday to attend chapel.

Recommendation

7:05 Consider approaching the City Authorities to mark Second Street with crosswalk lines.