

## **ACSI Accreditation Standards and Indicators**

### **Standard 1 – Philosophy and Foundations**

The school has developed written statements of philosophy, mission, vision, core values, and school-wide expected student outcomes as well as a statement of faith. These statements are well defined, systematically reviewed, and broadly implemented throughout the school. They outline the school's Christian distinctives and communicate a clear purpose and direction for school effectiveness and student growth and development.

1.1 The statement of faith and the philosophy, mission, vision, core values, and school-wide expected student outcome statements of the school are established and are reviewed regularly and systematically in a collaborative manner.

1.2 The school communicates its philosophy, mission, vision, core values, and school-wide expected student outcomes to its constituents and community.

1.3 The foundational documents are consistently applied as integrative, coordinating, and examining devices throughout all aspects of the programs, operations, and curriculum.

1.4 The executive leadership, faculty, and staff continually support the advancement of the philosophy, mission, and vision of the school.

1.5 From a distinctively Christian perspective, all staff demonstrate a commitment to the development of the whole child—spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially (Luke 2:52).

### **Standard 2 – Governance and Executive Leadership**

The school has Christ-centered governance and executive leadership that promotes effectiveness of the school and growth of the student through an established structure that contributes to an operationally and financially sound Christian educational institution. The executive leadership and governing body work in partnership to ensure the integrity, effectiveness, and reputation of the institution through the establishment of written policies and procedures. The head of school is responsible for the supervision of all operations of the school and implementation of board policies.

2.1 A governing body has been established, and its primary responsibilities include: developing general school governance policy; hiring the head of school; providing direction and strategic planning; ensuring the financial stability, effectiveness, and consistency between all campuses of the institution; defining the role of the governing body; defining the role of the head of school, and conducting systematic board self-evaluation.

2.2 The governance and executive leadership team of the school reflects a clear Christ-centered governance and executive leadership model. A policy is in place that requires a testimony and evidence of faith in Jesus Christ from all board members and executive leadership.

2.3 The governing body supports the head of school's prerogatives and responsibilities, and it provides for an appropriate annual evaluation of the head of school.

2.4 Constituents and stakeholders are provided appropriate input by leadership in the decision-making process, a practice that promotes a culture of participation, responsibility, transparency, and ownership.

2.5 Established written policies and procedures promote effective operations in admissions, governance, finance, and other operational aspects. Appropriate legal documents and clearly articulated articles of incorporation, governing body policies, and bylaws are established and are available for review.

2.6 Established written policies are in place to see that the educational and developmental needs of each admitted student are being met on the basis of biblical principles, professional ethics, and high standards. Staff members are sensitive to the culture, gender, language, and special needs of students and their families.

2.7 Financial resources are available to fulfill the mission and programs of the school, and financial operations and decisions are conducted with integrity and in accordance with biblical principles. Income received from tuition is appropriately used for education-related expenses within the school.

2.8 The budget is constructed carefully—using input from program heads—and is managed properly in accordance with the stated goals of the school. The budget reflects an accurate assessment of the cost of educating a student, including instructional supplies and informational technology. Stated student outcomes are appropriately financed.

2.9 A review of the school's finances is conducted by an external CPA who has no vested interest in the school at the time of initial accreditation and renewal. The annual statement of financial practices is submitted with the annual accreditation report.

2.10 Just compensation packages are documented for all employees and are commensurate with the training and services rendered.

2.11 The school ensures compliance with **applicable** local, state, and federal laws, and it is in good standing with all regulatory agencies.

### **Standard 3 – Home and Community Relations and Student Services**

The school exists and functions as an institution of reliability and authority by exhibiting a pattern of respect, trust, accountability, and dignity to its constituents, both internally and externally. Effective communication and relationships are fostered with constituents, as well as among constituents. A wide range of strategies are used to incorporate involvement by the parents and the community. It is expected that the school meets the educational and developmental needs of the students it enrolls. Services at the appropriate levels include guidance (both academic and personal) and student activities (curricular and co-curricular). Appropriate resources and planning occur to ensure that the mission, vision, and philosophy are being carried out.

3.1 Enrollment is sufficient to establish the viability of the school and all divisions it offers (i.e., EE, primary, elementary, secondary).

3.2 The school conducts regular demographic assessments of its constituents in light of the stated mission: (1) educational levels, (2) ethnic diversity, (3) faith backgrounds, and (4) other pertinent family information.

3.3 The length of the school day and year, as well as the number of instructional hours and days, complies with state or provincial laws, if applicable.

3.4 Regular, established, and effective two-way communication occurs between the school and its constituents.

3.5 The school has established biblical principles for resolving differences between the school and its constituents. These policies are written, reviewed, and communicated for effective implementation.

3.6 The school systematically seeks input/feedback from current and past students and other constituents in order to adjust its instructional and operational practices. Survey data is regularly gathered and analyzed for feedback regarding program satisfaction.

3.7 The nondiscrimination statement is published and evident in the actions, relationships, and programs of the school.

#### Guidance and Support Services

3.8 High school guidance services provide academic course selection along with college and career planning.

3.9 The school has a process to identify the unique learning needs of individual students and support is provided in order for them to meet the expected student outcomes.

3.10 The school communicates effectively with families regarding all guidance services provided by the school.

3.11 Confidential records of students are complete, organized, current, accessible only to appropriate personnel, compliant with applicable legal requirements, and kept in a safe location.

#### Student Activities

3.12 Student activities are consistent with the mission of the school, are a balanced variety, and are reflective of the needs of all students.

### **Standard 4 – Personnel**

The school hires personnel who have made a personal commitment to follow Jesus Christ and endorse the school's statement of faith. They are committed to the written philosophy, mission, vision, and core values of the school. Faculty and staff engage in ongoing professional development to improve instructional practices leading to continual growth in student learning and development of the instructional program. The executive leadership, instructional, and support staff are sufficient in number to provide for the effective delivery of quality education and are appropriately credentialed, degreed, trained, and qualified for their assigned duties.

4.1 Each staff member has a clear testimony of faith in Christ, has signed the school's statement of faith, and endorses the school's code of ethics/lifestyle statement.

4.2 The executive leadership of the school ensures that staff members know and understand the ethical considerations of their respective positions.

4.3 School personnel clearly indicate their commitment to the mission and philosophy of the school and biblically-based relationships therein.

4.4 The K–12 head of school and all K–12 principals hold an ACSI administrative certificate.

4.5 All K–12 teachers hold, at minimum, a bachelor's degree from an accredited college/university or an institution recognized by ACSI.

4.6 A minimum of 80 percent of K–12 faculty, which includes professional positions such as guidance counselors, athletic directors, library/media specialists, etc., based on full-time equivalents (FTEs), hold current ACSI certification.

4.7 Professional development for K–12 faculty, guidance personnel, informational resources staff, and other appropriate staff is ongoing and integral to the school and aligned with specific goals and instructional programs, and it includes training in the Christian school philosophy of education.

4.8 Policies and procedures that reflect ethical employment practices regarding faculty/staff and separation from service are implemented and regularly reviewed.

4.9 Executive leadership supports the implementation of effective instructional practices of faculty/staff through annual observation, evaluation, and goal setting to more effectively achieve desired student outcomes.

4.10 The number and preparation of instructional and support staff is sufficient for the scope of the school.

4.11 All personnel, including volunteers and substitute teachers, have the appropriate screening and background checks on file, and they are supervised by qualified staff. Orientation for new staff members is thorough and is conducted before any new staff have contact with the students.

4.12 Teachers and administrators work collaboratively with each other to positively affect school culture, encourage student learning, and promote organizational effectiveness.

## **Standard 5 – Instructional Program and Resources**

The instructional program consists of carefully developed, thoroughly documented, and well-executed curriculum elements that include educational philosophy, school-wide expected student outcomes, a variety of effective instructional strategies, adequate resources, and appropriate assessments that are based on current research and quality practices. The curriculum of the school is driven by well-written policies and procedures. Core instructional areas include Bible, language arts (reading, English, literature, grammar, and writing), mathematics, science, and social studies/history. It is sufficiently funded, collaboratively reviewed on a regular basis, and compiled using the school's mission, vision, core values, and school-wide expected student outcomes to ensure a biblical foundation for instruction. A method for assessing the effectiveness of school-wide expected learning outcomes is in place, and the results of the assessments are communicated regularly to all stakeholders. Informational resources exist to carry out the mission of the school by supporting the instructional program with ample and appropriate print, media, and technology resources. Qualified staff provide effective services to students, staff, and parents.

## Curriculum Guide/Mapping

5.1 The curriculum documents developed by the school provide a well-documented biblical basis for instruction of students in each course consistent with the goal of developing a biblical worldview in students.

5.2 The curriculum plans/maps, drive the instructional program. The plans/maps are current and include all the following components: (1) schoolwide expected student outcomes, (2) scope and sequence of instruction for each subject area at each grade level, (3) biblical integration concepts, (4) school-selected standards and, (5) assessments. The plans include course goals and objectives; resources, as well as the time allotted for each unit. The plans/maps are accessible to all faculty and inform instruction that clearly values the development of the whole child—spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially.

## Instructional Strategies

5.3 Bible content and instruction are required in the core curriculum.

5.4 The school systematically evaluates its instructional strategies, learning activities, and instructional technology, ensuring they are research-based and reflect sound educational practice.

5.5 Instructional strategies and equitable learning activities focus on active student engagement, the achievement of essential knowledge and skills, biblical wisdom and understanding, and higher-order thinking skills.

## ASSESSMENT

5.6 There is a systematic process in place for the assessment of student learning and development that includes multiple assessment measures over time to accomplish the expected student outcomes.

5.7 The school analyzes student performance data including 1) implications of school-wide trends seen from year to year; 2) monitoring the progress of individual students; 3) disaggregation of data by gender, ethnicity, and other factors important to the school; and 4) comparison to outside groups. Teachers are trained in data assessment analysis for program improvement.

5.8 The school uses the analysis of data in making educationally sound decisions regarding students, instructional strategies, and programs to better attain expected student outcomes.

5.9 The school has implemented procedures for regular communication of student achievement to all stakeholders. This communication includes the following: (1) major tests used, (2) schoolwide trends in achievement, (3) accomplishment of School-wide expected student outcomes, and (4) annual progress of individual students.

## Instructional Resources

5.10 Instructional and information resources which support teaching and learning are appropriate in number, culturally representative of the students, and include the Christian distinctives of the school.

5.11 Faculty members, students, and other relevant constituents provide input into the selection of instructional and information resources that support the attainment of school-wide expected student outcomes.

5.12 Information resources are readily accessible to students, staff, and faculty. Use of information resources is supported by trained staff.

5.13 Instructional technology competencies are incorporated into the teaching and learning process to improve the achievement of expected student outcomes. Well-integrated technology promotes creativity, collaboration, innovation, research skills, problem-solving, and digital citizenship.

#### Policies and Procedures

5.14 The school has a written classroom management philosophy and policies that are developmentally appropriate and biblically based, and they are implemented effectively and communicated to the school community.

5.15 Written policies and procedures are in place to allocate and protect instructional time and learning opportunities and support student learning and graduation requirements. The number of students per classroom is monitored for effective learning and student-teacher relationships.

5.16 The school instructs teachers and students in the ethical and moral use and evaluation of source materials, including verification, attribution and credit, appropriate referencing, and media literacy.

5.17 The school has, and regularly evaluates, a technology plan that includes the acquisition, inventory, and maintenance of software and hardware as well as acceptable use policies.

### **Standard 6 – Student Care**

Written policies and procedures are in place to ensure students' wellbeing—emotional, physical, spiritual, and academic. The school facilities (buildings and grounds) are appropriate in size, furnishings, and space to meet the stated philosophy, mission, and vision for the number and age of students served. The entire campus is a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment for teaching and learning. Safety procedures are documented and clearly understood, and they address the prevention and identification of abuse, bullying, and the presence of unwelcome guests. A relevant and thorough crisis management plan is in place, and the faculty and staff have been trained appropriately to handle various emergency situations. Regular drills and practices occur to assist in preparation for crisis events. Transportation guidelines for staff and students are developed, and written policies and procedures are in place.

#### Crisis Planning

6.1 A comprehensive written security and crisis management plan has been developed, regularly reviewed, and implemented, and it is supported by appropriate training for all staff and students.

6.2 The school communicates with legal authorities (i.e., the fire department, police department, and other applicable agencies), parents, media, and community members when a crisis or a major incident occurs.

#### Safety and Health

6.3 The school complies with applicable local, state, and federal laws regarding safety and health issues.

6.4 Students are in compliance with the requirements of civil authorities regarding immunizations, physical examinations, and communicable diseases. Records of health services rendered to students (including accidents and injuries) are appropriately noted and filed.

6.5 Written policies and procedures for all areas of health and safety services have been developed, reviewed, and implemented.

6.6 Biblically based plans and procedures are developed that educate the school community regarding harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

6.7 The school provides training for staff and complies with its legal reporting responsibilities in cases of alleged child abuse, neglect, or other areas in which reporting is mandated.

#### Food/Nutrition Services

6.8 The school complies with local, state, and federal regulations regarding preparation, delivery, handling, and storage of food.

6.9 The school provides a suitable and hygienic eating space for the staff and students.

6.10 Nutritional standards for meals and snacks have been established.

#### Facilities, Environment, and Transportation

6.11 Required local, state, provincial, and federal legal standards for fire protection, sanitation, and transportation are met.

6.12 The school maintains the site, facilities, services, and equipment to provide an environment that is safe, secure, and orderly.

6.13 The facilities are secure and suitable for the size of the school; the school environment is monitored and maintained to ensure it is conducive to the instruction and development of the whole child.

6.14 The recreation area/playground, common areas, and athletic area are safe, age appropriate, and large enough for the number of students.

6.15 A written facilities plan is in place to address future programs; enrollment changes; staff, facility, and technical needs; as well as future capital improvements.

6.16 Vehicles and drivers used to transport students for all school activities follow the school's policies as well as government and insurance regulations.

6.17 Adequate liability, vehicle, and property insurance are in place.

6.18 Written policies and procedures are in place for routine safety inspections, service, and repair of school-owned vehicles and for reporting vehicle accidents—including communication with all constituents.

## **Standard 7 – Character, Values and Spiritual Formation**

The school shall provide for spiritual nurture and discipleship of its students with the goal of developing a biblical worldview. Spiritual nurturing of Christ-like character is planned, intentional, and systematic in implementation. Mentoring and discipleship experiences are necessary components in a spiritual formation strategy. Students are given opportunities to serve others and develop a Christ-like attitude toward the poor, needy, and vulnerable. A commitment to a community of faith is modeled by the faculty and emphasized to all students. Spiritual formation assessment is integral to effective and ongoing improvement of the school program.

7.1 School-wide expected student outcomes include character development, acquisition of Christian values, and spiritual formation.

7.2 Christ-like respect, compassion, and caring for self and all others is taught and demonstrated by school personnel.

7.3 Mentoring and discipleship experiences focus on spiritual formation, character development, and the instilling of Christian values.

7.4 Constituent interactions reflect the attitude of Christ. Communication between constituents demonstrates sensitivity and responsiveness to the individual needs, interests, and temperaments of the students.

7.5 All aspects of the school and its instructional program reflect developmentally appropriate application of a biblical worldview and Christ-like character and values.

7.6 Age-appropriate opportunities for service and missions, including compassionate outreach to the poor, needy, or vulnerable, are provided as a means of spiritual growth and formation.

7.7 Active participation in a local Christian church community is required of the faculty and emphasized within the school's philosophy and goals.

7.8 Assessment of the spiritual development of students is intentionally included in the ongoing evaluation of the school's effectiveness in formally measuring its school-wide expected student outcomes.

## **Standard 8 – Continuous School Improvement**

The school must, with appropriate stakeholder input, systematically develop and annually update a continuous school improvement plan (CSIP). The plan, based on the school's philosophy, mission, vision, core values, and schoolwide expected student outcomes, includes specific goals, as well as action items. The process is driven by data collection and analysis. This plan must have significant focus on how it will promote organizational growth and high achievement of schoolwide expected student outcomes. The CSIP reflects a pervasive culture of ongoing improvement and accountability.

(No indicators)