

WELS School Accreditation - WELSSA

Overview of Accreditation Process

Exploration

1. The school (ECM, LES, LHS) requests information/handbook from the WELSSA executive office.
2. The school leadership reviews the standards in the handbook and collectively decides to proceed with the accreditation process.



Preparation for Candidacy Status

1. The school satisfactorily completes items 1-3 in Chapter 5 – Orientation and Approval for Candidacy (p. 5).
2. The school applies for Candidacy Status by completing and submitting the application to the WELSSA executive office along with the appropriate fee. *(Note fee schedule on page two of the application.)*
3. After assigning a consultant the WELSSA Executive Director approves the school for Candidacy Status.



Self-study

1. Using WELSSA resources including the Self-Study Standards and working with the WELSSA consultant, the school conducts its self-study.
2. The school develops its Self-Study Report using the template located in the current WELSSA Handbook.
3. A date for the site visit is determined between the WELSSA office and the school administrator within 9-24 months of candidacy approval.
4. The WELSSA executive office, in consultation with the administrator of the school, selects the visiting team members.
5. The school submits its self-study report to the team captain at least 4 weeks prior to the site visit.



Validation

1. Visiting team conducts on-site visit consisting of two or three days and a “meet and greet” event.
2. Visiting team reports findings to the school including its recommendation regarding the school’s accreditation status.
3. Visiting team submits its written report to the school and the WELSSA executive office.



Commission Decision

1. The Executive Director’s office reviews the Visiting Team’s written report.
2. The Executive Director submits a recommendation for approval to the Commission on Lutheran Schools.
3. The Commission gives final approval of the recommendation. This occurs in September each year.



If awarded:

1. Accreditation cycle is renewable every five years.
2. The school must submit an annual report (*due June 30*) of improvement progress along with fee to maintain accreditation status.

If deferred:

CLS submits findings to the school administration.
Note that every effort will be made to ensure success.