

# ROLE(S) OF ACCREDITATION

## **WASC/NLSA**

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

National Lutheran School Accreditation

Presentation by Joel Wahlers

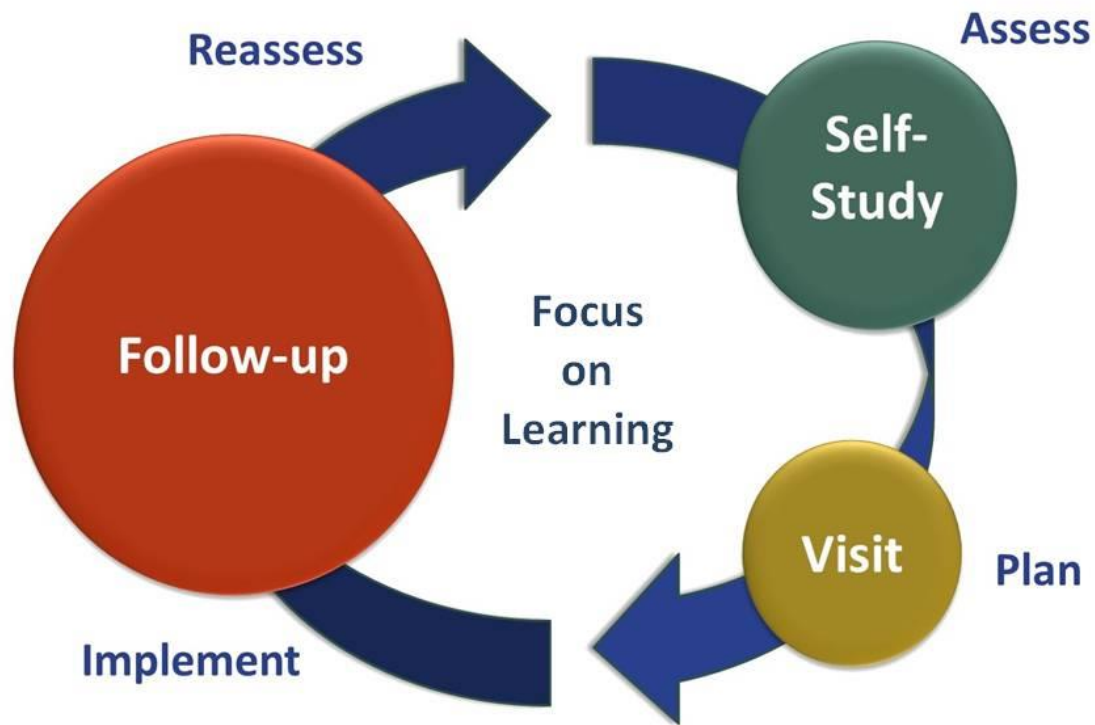
# Accreditation

2

**"Accreditation** is defined as a collegial process based on self- and peer assessment for public accountability and improvement of academic quality. Peers assess the quality of an institution or academic program and assist the faculty and staff in improvement.

# Accreditation Process

3



**Accreditation Cycle of Quality**

# Questions

4

- What do you value about the accreditation process?
- What do you find the most difficult or challenging part of the accreditation process?

# Leading the Accreditation Process

5

- ❑ CONNECTION TO THE MISSION OF OUR SCHOOLS
- ❑ “EMBRACING” THE PROCESS
- ❑ BENEFITS OF WASC & NLSA ACCREDITATION
- ❑ PREPARATION AND ORGANIZATION
- ❑ DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS
- ❑ ROLES OF KEY PARTICIPANTS
- ❑ OTHER ISSUES

# Connecting to the Mission

6

- Lutheran schools are a strategy to accomplish the mission of the church – to make disciples
- We do this when our schools are high quality bridges to our communities
- NLSA key purpose – Mission Accountability
- Quality is needed in how students learn and how children and families grow in their relationship to Jesus Christ

“There is no better way to ensure the quality of our Lutheran schools as we continue to be one of the most powerful mission assets to our church body in our local communities.”

# “Embrace” the Process

8

- Two approaches to the Accreditation Process
- Integrate the accreditation process into your ongoing strategic planning
- School Action Plan should be the guiding, planning, and implementation document for your school
- Do an honest assessment of your school
- Redeemer, Redwood City
- WASC Doc & Just summary document



# Benefits of WASC/NLSA Accreditation

9

- WASC and NLSA compliment each other
- WASC has a strong focus on standards related to student learning that is flexible
- WASC allows for a larger outside view of your school
- NLSA adds a critical spiritual dimension to accreditation = “Mission Accountability”
- WASC combined with NLSA makes a strong statement of quality

- WASC Study on the Benefits of Accreditation



# WASC Commission

11

- California Administrators (7)
- Private Schools (11)
- Public School Organizations (5)
- Hawaii Public School Representatives (4)
- Public Members (2)
- East Asia Regional Council of Schools
- Pacific Islands Schools
- Post Secondary Education



# Desertfrost Commissioned Study

## Initial Results

12

- First major comprehensive study on the effectiveness of The Accreditation Process for schools
- Surveyed public high school principals in California
- Response rate: 944
- Conducted 30 randomly selected public high school principals from a variety of schools
- Three Guiding Questions:
  - Is the school doing everything possible to support high quality learning?
  - To what extent was the WASC process effective in influencing change?
  - What is the long-term effect of the WASC process on schoolwide improvement and improved student learning?

## □ Emerging Themes

- Builds a professional culture
- Referral to and alignment of action plan goals
- Use of process to update school goals
- Schools regularly examine programs, processes, data around school goals
- Helps schools maintain focus on programs, students, parents, and community
- Promotes input from stakeholders
- Promotes accountability

- Strengthens the role of the principal in focusing change efforts
- Fosters school's capacity for internal reflection and inquiry
- Helps schools maintain a focus on educational programs and students
- Reminds us to regularly look at programs, processes, and data
- Schools struggle with building culture that supports cycle of inquiry

- Schools struggle to build professional school cultures that systematically use data to change practice
- School Boards value the “stamp of approval”, but their understanding of accreditation as school improvement is limited
- Engaging parents a challenge; despite their efforts, same group of parents are usually engaged
- Schools struggle with embedding an ongoing process around the schoolwide action plan

# Embedding Ongoing Improvement

16

- How do you embed an ongoing improvement process and culture in your school?



# Organizational Considerations

17

- Core Value of WASC & NLSA is “Broad Involvement” of stakeholders in the school
- This genuine input and involvement of all stakeholders is a major factor in determining Accreditation Status
- Maintain internal control of the process by using your faculty and staff
- Start Early

- Finish Chapter 1-3 before beginning Chapter 4, and finish Chapter 4 before beginning Chapter 5
- Make Data Driven decisions

# Accreditation Self-Study Timeline

19

- Start Early – 12-18 months
- Sign up for the WASC Self Study Trainings
- Establish Leadership Committee
- Complete Chapter 1-3
- Establish Focus Groups
- Give time for Focus Groups to complete their sections
- Edit Final Copy of Chapter 4
- Work with Leadership Committee to develop Chapter 5

- Gain input from Staff, Board, Parents, Students on Chapter 5
- Publish Final Self-Study Report

# School Calendar Timeline

21

- October, 2016
  - Establish Leadership Committee
  - Attend WASC S.S. Training #1
- February, 2017
  - Complete work on Chapter 1-3
- March, 2017
  - Establish Focus Groups for Chapter 4
  - Train Focus Groups
- September, 2017
  - Focus Groups complete draft reports

- November, 2017
  - Leadership Committee completes Chapter 5 Draft
  - Draft is reviewed by staff, BOD, parents, students
- January, 2018
  - Leadership Committee publishes Self-Study Document
- March, 2018
  - School Sit Visit by WASC Visiting Committee
- May, 2018
  - Submit Report and Revised Action Plan to WASC
- April, 2019

- April, 2019
  - Submit Year One Annual Report to District Accreditation Commission

# Assessment Data Collection & Analysis

24

- Data Disaggregation – how is the information gathered influencing program decisions
- Assessment Analysis should be “on-going” and should drive the decision making process
- Use a variety of assessment or data collection forms
- Be honest and critical with what the results show about your school
- Track your school data with horizontal analysis



# Question

25

- What forms of assessment or data do you use?

# Forms of School and Student Assessment

26

- Standardized Testing
- Placement Testing
- Reading or Math Curriculum Assessments
- Parent & Student Surveys
- Teacher Surveys
- Alumni Surveys
- Input from High Schools
- Focus Groups

# “Contributors” to Accreditation

27

- Principal or Director
- Self-Study Coordinator
- Leadership Committee
- Teachers
- Governing Board
- Pastors
- Parents
- Students

- Church Members
- Community Members
- Consultants
- Visiting Committee Chairperson
- Visiting Committee
- District Commission
- WASC Commission
- NLSA NAC (National Accreditation Commission)

# What role do they play

29

- Principal or Director
  - ▣ Sets the timetable and oversees the process
  - ▣ Leads and models the honest self assessment and comprehensive nature of the accreditation process
- Self-Study Coordinator
  - ▣ Organizes the Self-Study process
  - ▣ Assures the timetable is met

- Leadership Committee
  - Compiles and publishes the information for Chapter 1-3
  - Monitors the writing of the Self-Study
  - Develops the initial draft of the School Action Plan
  - Represents the school
  - Monitors the ongoing improvement process of the School Action Plan

- Pastor
  - ▣ Supports the process
  - ▣ Stays connected to process to ensure the “mission” of the school is maintained and improved
- Teachers
  - ▣ Help lead and stay intricately involved in the development of the self-study.

- Governing Board(s)
  - ▣ Ensures the accreditation process is an ongoing part of the school's culture
  - ▣ Stays involved and supports the administrative efforts to be agents of change
- Parents
  - ▣ Respond to requests for feedback
  - ▣ Become involved in focus groups
- Students
  - ▣ Be honest and constructive in giving feedback



- Church members
  - Stay informed about the school
  - Be involved and serve on focus groups representing the mission of the church
- Community members
  - How have you involved non-church or school community members?

- Consultants
  - Help the school value the accreditation timeline
  - Be constructive and honest with schools on their progress
- Visiting Committee Chair
  - Understand the ministry setting of the school
  - Assess readiness
  - Make sure the visit is productive and the product is challenging but manageable

- Visiting Committee
  - Confirms the school has a reasonable self assessment and plan for improvement
  - Affirms the efforts of the school
- NLSA District Commission
  - Confirms the visiting committee report and make a recommendation that is fair and consistent
  - Monitors the schools' ongoing improvement process

- WASC Commission
  - ▣ Confirms the visiting committee report and make a decision on a school that is fair and consistent
  - ▣ Assures the accreditation process provides accountability and ongoing improvement
- NLSA National Accreditation Commission
  - ▣ Ensures the accreditation process enhances the mission of the church
  - ▣ Confirms the visiting committee report and make a decision on a school that is fair and consistent

- Assures the accreditation process provides accountability and ongoing improvement

Accreditation is most effective when there is a broad base of input and ownership in the total process.



# Question

39

- Who or what am I missing?

# WASC Self-Study Outcomes

- 1. The involvement and collaboration of all staff and other stakeholders to support student achievement
- 2. The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards
- 3. The analysis of data about students and student achievement
- 4. The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to the schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and WASC criteria
- 5. The alignment of a long-range action plan to the school's areas of need; the capacity to implement and monitor the accomplishment of the plan.



# Self Study Tips

41

- It needs to be complete, but not long
- Include data...and how it is used
- Complete Chapter 1-3 before starting Chapter 4, and complete Chapter 4 before starting Chapter 5
- Start early
- Do not rush the process, but stay on task
- Be open and honest through the whole process

# Annual Reports

42

- These are unique to NLSA
- This is the best documentation of progress
- Write a comprehensive and complete report
- This is a Cumulative Report
- Color Coding

technology, implementation of new technology, effective use of technology staff, and the training necessary to effectively use appropriate technology as a part of instruction and learning.

Establish a written equipment and technology service/software upgrade plan	2014	2012	This is integrated within our new Technology Plan.
Develop a orientation and training process for new teachers or staff on use of administrative and instructional technology	2014	2012	Due to the variety of positions and levels of technology knowledge, it was determined to have the Technology Coordinator meet with new staff on an individual basis to help orient them to the technology tools they will work with in their position.
Review and revise(if necessary) the use of the computer teacher position at St. John's	2013	2012	After discussions with the computer teacher and classroom teachers, some changes were made in the computer teacher's role, however for now her role of teaching in the computer lab has remained for the most part.
Determine what technology devices are needed by students in the classroom to enhance learning and implement their use with an appropriate implementation plan	2014	2013	This past year, our school signed up and implemented Google Apps for Education. In addition to the ongoing use of ipads in the classroom, we purchased six new chromebooks and set up google accounts for all of our 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> graders. In 2013-14, we implemented a 1:1 program in 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> grades using chromebooks as the student device in the classroom. In 2014-15, 6 <sup>th</sup> graders will also be incorporated into our 1:1 program so that all of the middle school will be using common learning devices. All of these major developments are part of a comprehensive Technology Plan that was developed in 2013. It was reviewed and revised in the spring of 2014.

#### Action Plan #4

The administration and staff review and revise the Resource Program to allow for more effective use of the resource teacher and the assessment of the program and its participating students.

Employ an outside review and assessment of the resource program	2013		This has been put on hold due to the turnover of our resource teacher. This will be addressed in consultation with our new resource teacher.
Revise the Program goals and objectives based on outside assessment	2014		This has not yet been addressed.
Develop assessment tools to determine Resource program effectiveness	2014		Some of these tools are being used as part of our review of student and program assessment.

#### Action Plan #5

The church and school leadership develop and implement a long range written plan for evangelism to unchurched or non-Christian school families.

Develop an evangelism outreach plan to unchurched and non-Christian school families	2012	2014	During the summer and fall of 2014, the Church Leadership Team and the faculty developed an Evangelism Plan for the school. This included a list of ways in which we do reach out to students and families, as well as ways in which we can be more intentional about providing opportunities for them to grow in their relationship to Christ and His Church. This school year, we have had a large number of baptisms of students and parents.
Begin implementation of the evangelism plan to	2012		This has begun as we have set specific goals for the 2014-15 and 2015-

# Other Issues

44

- Extensions
- Training (especially SS training)
- Governance issues in Lutheran Schools
- Legal culpability
- Schools of Distinction

# Comments and Questions