



International News

Hello! I hope that you have weathered the hurricane that this school year has been for so many. I know that it has been challenging and unpredictable, but I very much hope that you have also found some blessings along the way.

First, please email directly to me or Kim (email addresses below) with ANY questions pertaining to accreditation. Contacting any other office at ACSI will just delay a response getting to you. International schools have some unique aspects to accreditation; we are best equipped to answer your questions.

Please take the time now to access your school account and update your school roster. You can actually make updates at any time by going to your.acsi.org and logging in to your account. This information is regularly accessed by ACSI personnel for a variety of purposes – including for accreditation – so it is vital to have accurate and up-to-date information. Inaccurate information within your account can lead to issues with ACSI communication not being sent to the right people. If you are unsure how to update your school roster, please contact Kim.

During this school year, we will have conducted 20 accreditation virtual team visits. I would like to share with you some of what we have learned during these virtual visits.

- It is possible to do a high-quality virtual team visit with both the school and the team having confidence in the process and the outcome.
- Virtual team visits will never be the preferred method of managing ongoing accreditation. It is impossible to incorporate certain aspects of an onsite visit into a virtual format. Nothing can replace face-to-face interactions.
- Some things do not translate well to a virtual format – for example, casual conversations with staff and students, general observations around campus, spontaneous interactions, an understanding of the school community, etc. These things cannot be done virtually.
- Planning and scheduling for a virtual visit must be very intentional and requires a larger investment of time.
- There needs to be a more intentional focus on team dynamics in a virtual format.
- Teams need to develop and practice “deep listening” skills for a virtual visit to be successful.
- It is more difficult for team members to pull away from their normal daily lives to serve on a virtual accreditation team since they are still in their everyday environment and not onsite at the school.
- Technology can be a challenge – even when you think it will not be.
- Schools and teams must be prepared for the unexpected.

At this point, we are *planning* for onsite visits for the 2021-2022 school year, but that is far from certain. We are attentive to the ebb and flow of world conditions and will adjust plans accordingly.

Congratulations to the following schools who were accredited at the Commission meeting in February 2021:

- Cahaya Bangsa Classical School, Indonesia
- Hope International School, Cambodia
- Inter-American School, Guatemala
- Kyiv Christian Academy, Ukraine
- Nicaragua Christian Academy International, Nicaragua
- Sekolah Dian Harapan – Daan Mogot, Indonesia

Blessings to you all as we look toward the 2021-2022 school year!

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Academic Services News

Accreditation Revision Update

The revision of the accreditation protocol is underway. This school year, committees have drafted a new set of standards. Those standards have been sent out for comments to a certain number of individuals familiar with accreditation. Once that feedback has been received, the Office of Academic Services will make appropriate revisions. The committees working on the indicators and rubrics are continuing their work and plan to have those completed this coming fall. During the 2021-2022 school year, ACSI will address the process elements of the new protocol and develop the support materials needed. The final year, 2022-23, will be used for communication and training so that schools will be familiar with the standards and ready to implement the new protocol when it comes time for them to renew their accreditation. Schools hosting an initial or renewal accreditation visit through spring 2023 will utilize our current [REACH – 2019 Edition protocol](#). If you have any questions about the transition period, or the appropriate protocol for your school to use on their next accreditation visit, please contact your [Divisional Accreditation office](#).

The revised standards represent a new generation of thinking about accreditation. Focusing on accountability through standards and excellence through improvement, the accreditation revision will feature updated processes and the integration of Flourishing Schools Research into the school improvement process.

Complaints

As an accrediting agency, ACSI does have a formal complaint process for issues that relate to accreditation, membership, and teacher/administrator certification. To accept a complaint, it must be presented to ACSI in writing through the approved online form. **ACSI does not act on anonymous complaints.** Each issue will be examined to see if it is **actionable** or **non-actionable**. The individual complainant must have already exhausted the grievance process within the school before filing a complaint with ACSI. If the actions of the school are still in process, ACSI will allow the school to complete its own steps first.

ACSI is not a government or regulatory agency. It does not solve or mediate disputes between parties such as parents, students, and/or teachers and the schools they are involved with. Its only authority comes in the accreditation and membership of schools or granting of certification of individuals. If schools are interested in receiving more information, they can contact their divisional accreditation director or email accreditation@acsi.org.

Information for Fulfilling Specific Indicators

There are times where more clarity, a rationale, and/or a sample are needed to support specific indicators throughout the ACSI REACH Accreditation protocol. ACSI has developed and curated various resources that provide additional information as a school or visiting team is working through the protocol. Those resources are contained on our [School Accreditation Documents](#) page under the “Information for Fulfilling Specific Indicators” tab and are organized by Standard and Indicator number.

Accreditation for schools with Online, Blended, or Hybrid Programs – 2021-2022

Schools are asking if offering instruction online into the future will impact their accreditation or if they are required to have their ONLINE/BLENDED/HYBRID program accredited. Here are some basic principles that should answer most questions.

- If the delivery model you have used during this year as a result of Covid-19 is TEMPORARY (implemented due to the virus), you do not have to seek a different accreditation. If your intention is to continue some form of online, blended, or hybrid delivery model into the future, there are questions on the annual report that will help the ACSI divisional office track your progress in order to determine how to best assist you moving forward.
- If you are only offering a few permanent online, blended, or hybrid courses, or just getting started, those courses are covered under your current accreditation. Again, the annual report each year asks about the percentage of online courses offered, which will help ACSI staff to track your progress and better assist you.
- ACSI staff may proactively send you the separate Online protocol so you can be aware of the standards as you are building your program. This will help you develop the program in line with best practices.

- Once your school reaches the thresholds that require a special protocol, ACSI staff will consult with you about when you will need to complete a self-study and host a visit using that protocol. It will be a year or more from the time you supply that information on the Annual Report.
- For additional questions, contact your divisional accreditation director or accreditation@acsi.org.

Announcements

- Watch for your **Membership Renewal Invoice** coming to your email in early June. The LDRP and optional state fees will each be invoiced separately.

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