VISITING TEAM REPORT

Sample Christian School

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School's Demographics

School's Demographics

	Information
School Name	Sample Christian School
Address 1	123 Main St
Address 2	
City, ST Zip	Anytown, ST 34545
Phone	719-555-5555
Head of School	John Doe
Contact Information	john_doe@domain.com
Dual accreditation	
School Website	www.samplechristianschool.org
Grades Accredited	EE-12
Enrollment in accredited grades	350

Intro to the Visiting Team Report

Accreditation is what all good educational organizations seek in order to validate their quality and to verify they are striving for excellence. It requires a strong, pervasive, and continuous commitment as well as a demonstrated capacity to maintain quality expectations as defined by the established standards. Typically, accreditation stretches the organization and infuses change into it.

The process of accreditation involves three significant elements:

1. Intensive, program-wide, self-assessment, analysis, and improvement planning

2. External consultation, review, validation, and insights shared from a group of visiting colleagues

3. Ongoing accountability for improvement through annual reporting and reaccreditation

In order to become or continue to be accredited by ACSI, a school must meet foundational requirements. Compliance with all the standards of ACSI accreditation is required for the duration of the term of accreditation. A school is determined to be in compliance with a standard when all the nonnegotiable indicators are shown to be met and the majority of other indicators are determined to be demonstrated at an acceptable level as well. Within each standard area, the school must commit to coming into compliance with all indicators and the standard as a whole, but there may be indicator areas (other than nonnegotiable indicators) that are determined to be in partial compliance and therefore are areas for the school to commit to continuous improvement.

ACSI accreditation is a highly effective way for a Christian school to evaluate itself in light of its unique educational mission. A quality Christian school excels in all areas of 1) academic thinking, 2) skills for life and living, 3) biblical worldview development, 4) personal character and spiritual formation. The self-study process guides a school to evaluate and reflect on all that it does in light of this distinctive four-pronged mission.

The Visiting Team Review provides the school with a thorough review of their own self-assessment work, concentrating on validating their identification of strengths, areas to improve, and development of appropriate goals for the continuous school improvement plan. Both the school's self-assessment and the visiting team's analysis are measured against the school's own mission, vision, and expected student outcomes as well as defined accreditation standards of the accrediting organizations by which the school has chosen to become accredited. In order to ensure consistency from one school to another, rubrics have been developed to describe what compliance looks like for each indicator of each standard. Commendations and recommendations are developed when aspects of the school are either above or below the expected level of compliance. Both the school and the visiting team use the ratings on the rubrics in order to identify what commendations and recommendations are most appropriate.

Report Components

The visiting team describes the school by completing a school profile. Information is shared about the school's history, demographics, student achievement, survey results, mission, vision for the future, and other pertinent data in order to help the reader understand the context of the school during the time of the team's visit.

Also discussed are any significant changes the school has experienced since the previous accreditation or candidacy visit. These changes may impact the school's ability to meet accreditation standards or implement the continuous school improvement plan.

If the school has been previously accredited, the visiting team assesses whether the major recommendations have been completed or should continue to be addressed in the current cycle of accreditation. If the school is in its initial accreditation, this section will be left blank.

In a REACH accreditation report, a number of indicators are identified as critical indicators because they are considered of utmost importance. A visit may not occur unless at least 90% of the critical indicators are met and

the vast majority of other indicators are also in compliance. If a school finds that it cannot meet one of the required critical indicators, the consultant and school may work together to request an exception. Upon completion of the visit, the visiting team briefly comments on the compliance of the school to the critical indicators, specifically mentioning any that were not fully met.

After the visiting team has completed its analysis, the most significant commendations and recommendations are selected as Major Commendations and Major Recommendations. **Major Commendations** are areas in which the school excels beyond other schools of similar size, resources, or make-up. These are areas which have likely contributed to increased student achievement or other identified expected student outcomes.
Major Recommendations are areas which need to improve for the school to fully meet compliance in some area, based on the rubrics provided. These become priorities for the school to accomplish in a timely fashion. Progress on these recommendations will need to be addressed in the annual reports sent to the appropriate regional office. Major recommendations are expected to be incorporated into the school's improvement plan. These major recommendations may be a combination of several indicators or certain aspects of indicators. They may also come from only one aspect of an indicator when the indicator otherwise appears to be in compliance.

Commendations and recommendations that do not rise to the level of majors are important for the school to address during the period of accreditation. However, they are not considered as mandatory. The school is encouraged to evaluate them and decide within each department which ones should receive attention, and in what order. There is no requirement to report on these in the annual reports or mid-term reports.

Some schools have additional standard sets such as Early Education or Online Accreditation standards. If those are added, they will appear after each regular standard section. However, it is important to note that the *Brief Overview*, *Strength*s, and *Areas for Improvement* in the regular standard section reflect ALL the standard sets. There is only one of each of those three items for each standard, regardless of how many various types have been added to the protocol.

The REACH process is thought provoking in its approach, stimulating in its methods, and efficient in its procedures, both for the school and the team. The end result produces a Visiting Team Report that will assist the school in its efforts to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness.

Self-Study Committees

Self-Study Committees

	Committee Name	Committee Chair	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5	Person 6	Person 7	Person 8
Steering Committee	Steering Committee	John Doe	Sam Smith	Annie Smith	Suzie Que				
Committee #1	Standard 1	Sam Smith	Susie Sample	Eddie Example					
Committee #2	Standard 2	Bill Johnson	Betsy Ross	Tom Jefferson					
Committee #3	Standard 3	Joe Turner	Frank Boggs	Adam Pitts					
Committee #4	Standard 4	Annie Smith	Steve Smedley	Bobbie Johnson					
Committee #5	Standard 5	Sally Jones	Fred Brown	Sue Stevenson	Teresa Salton	Chris Thronston	Molly Modelo		
Committee #6	Standard 6	Steve Smedley	Fred Brown	Elijah Hendrix					
Committee #7	Standard 7	Paul Primero	Molly Modelo	Sam Sneed					
Committee #8	Standard 8	Jeff Plano	Joanne Jensen	George Jones					
Committee #9	Hospitality	Briana Rincon	Lane Smith	Johnna Lotts					
Committee #10	Surveys/Assessment	Suzie Que	Sharon Rose	Freddy Franklin					
Committee #11									
Committee #12									
Committee #13									

ACSI REACH Standards

Standard 1 - PHILOSOPHY AND FOUNDATIONS The school has developed written statements of philosophy, vision, mission, core values, and schoolwide 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.

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.

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 cocurricular). Appropriate resources and planning occur to ensure that the mission, vision, and philosophy are being carried out to meet the expected outcomes.

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.

Standard 5 - INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM AND RESOURCES The instructional program consists of carefully developed, thoroughly documented, and well-executed curriculum elements that include educational philosophy, schoolwide 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, comparatively reviewed on a regular basis, and compiled using the school's mission, vision, core values, and schoolwide expected student outcomes to ensure a biblical foundation for instruction. A method for assessing the effectiveness of learning schoolwide expected student 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 student, staff, and parents.

Standard 6 - STUDENT CARE Written policies and procedures are in place to ensure students' well being—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 Crisis Planning 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.

Standard 7 - CHARACTER, VALUES, AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF STUDENTS The school shall provide for spiritual nurture and discipleship of its students with the goal of developing a biblical worldview. Spiritual nurturing of Christlike 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 Christlike 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.

Standard 8 - 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 long-range and short-range 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.

Introduction to the Visit

Intro to the Visit

This section is a narrative introduction to the Visiting Team Report. It contains comments and pertinent information about the visit that helps the reader understand any special considerations or conditions that may have existed.

Sample Christian School (SCS) is deeply committed to their mission of providing an environment that is built around three key words... Loving, Learning, and Leading. This has not changed over the past 30 years the school has been in existence. This accreditation visit is the third cycle of accreditation that SCS has gone through. This is the second one for which they will be jointly accredited with Cognia. The self-study chairperson was the same person for this cycle as for the previous visit. Because of this, there was an ease with the process that wasn't in place for the previous one. Teachers and staff were able to build on the work that was started five years ago. They were also able to use some of the same evaluative tools and compare results. Teachers were better prepared for the work they needed to do as part of the process and very few were asking basic questions such as "How will this accreditation process help us in the long run?" They had seen a commitment to continuous improvement and had been the recipients of more information that they found helpful
on a practical level. The general feeling was one of acceptance of the process and even embracing it rather than being skeptical of its value, as was expressed during previous visits. Much of the credit for this improved attitude came from the well-organized approach of the self-study coordinator and the fact that the administration had used the information gleaned from the previous accreditation cycle.

Significant Changes

This section describes any significant changes the school has experienced and how they have dealt with those. Of special note would be the impact of these on the accreditation standards or the school's ability to accomplish their continuous school improvement plan.

There have been several significant changes to SCS over the past five years. Some of those changes were made as a result of the school board and the administrative leadership team more clearly defining who they believe the constituents of the school should be. Five years ago, the Caucasian population of the school approached 90%. There were only a few international students in the high school and very few children of single parent families. The percentage of families receiving financial assistance was about 10% less than it is at this time. The changes that are reflected in the current demographic information reflect intentional changes in a desire to be more reflective of the greater family of God. The school family has had different reactions to these changes but on the whole, the response has been positive. Giving to the scholarship fund has been remarkable. Host families have come forward to house the international students and many families have appreciated the increasingly multi-cultural approach the teaching staff has had. A few families have asked questions about how these changes will affect their children but on the whole, communication has been done well, and the growing pains have been minimal.

Other changes have occurred in the community that have had a negative effect on the school. Anytown has become the site of fierce competition for two state online charter schools. These schools make a pitch to families who might be interested in homeschooling their children and they are free and one even supplies the family with a computer if they qualify financially. Several families have left SCS in order to pursue this option. It has worked out for some and not worked so well for others. Unfortunately, it has become a polarizing issue in the school community. Families have stopped being friends over the issue and there has been quite a bit of tension in

certain churches. On top of this, some of the churches have started academic support groups and enrichment activities for students in these online schools. Sports is a contentious issue between families. Some students have come back to SCS to join as homeschooled students and they are allowed to join certain sports (those where there is room). For other sports, families have gone to the public school system and that is also polarizing. When the online option does not work out well for some students, negative feelings are sometimes so strong that families are uncomfortable returning to SCS. While this is not something that SCS teachers and administrators have caused, they are at a loss for how to deal with it at this point. The numbers of students they have lost has reached about 15% of their population. Unfortunately, it has affected the middle school disproportionately. While there were some weaknesses in the teaching staff in middle school, this issue has exacerbated that problem. The administration identified the middle school as the area which most needed the most attention during this self-study process. The two recommendations in Standard Five are not exclusively written for the middle school but they may apply there more heavily than at the other two campus levels.

Other significant changes in the school include the addition of a full-time staff member who focuses on international students. This has helped with the issues raised by increasing the international student population. That staff member provides international student services part of the day, including admissions assistance and monitoring the host family living arrangements. The other half of the day, that same staff person teaches ELL classes and provides academic support to international students. Other staff changes have included a special needs staff person who assists students at the elementary and middle school. This person has a degree in special education. There is also a part-time resource person at the high school who helps students with math and English in particular. This staff member is a trained teacher but does not have a degree in special education. She assists students in the media center several periods and assists students who are scheduled in the resource room for certain periods of the day.

On the academic side, the curriculum documents have been replaced by the digital product Curriculum Trak. This has been a considerable step up for keeping the documents updated. Teachers have embraced this change and are enjoying the features of being able to share their work with other teachers, other levels, and departments. There is still more to be done to bring it up to compliance for REACH Indicator 5.2. Another change has been the decision to add Reading Plus for grades 3-12. Students are just finishing the first year of a three year commitment. Data will be examined and changes to instruction will be made in response to progress students make in their reading scores.

Response to Major Recommendations (for reaccreditations)

This is a list of the school's major recommendations from the previous accreditation visit and the team's assessment on whether these have been completed or should continue to be addressed in the current cycle of accreditation.

This is a list of the school's major recommendations from the previous accreditation visit and the team's assessment on whether these have been completed or should continue to be addressed in the current cycle of accreditation.

1. Plan and develop a comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan that includes all factors identified as necessary such as time factors, resources, and personnel.

Visiting Team Response:Complete

2. Update curriculum guides to include school wide expected student outcomes and revise the biblical integration.

Visiting Team Response: In Process (see Standard Five, Significant Changes, and Major Recommendation#3)

3. Provide and implement an objective directed professional development program that considers the needs of the individual teacher as well as the general school goals.

Visiting Team Response: Complete

4. Implement a plan by which all staff and volunteers who work with students complete a background check process and have proper supervision.

Visiting Team Response: Complete

Summary Assessment of Compliance to Critical Indicators

In this section the visiting team comments on the critical indicators that were not fully met. There must be corresponding recommendations for unmet critical indicators.

SCS was in compliance with all critical indicators except 5.2. This was in partial compliance and as a result, yielded a major recommendation.

School Profile Review

Historical Overview

This section is a summary of the founding of the school, as well as the original mission. Also included are any significant developments, accreditation history, awards/recognition, and challenges the school has faced.

In October 1984, parents from a large non-denominational church in Anytown, USA began to meet to discuss the opening of a Christian elementary school in their community. While the first thoughts were to have it be church sponsored, it quickly gathered other interested parents from nearby churches. The group realized that for it to be widely supported throughout the community, they needed to open it up to all the evangelical churches in town. The church with the largest group offered the school free rent for five years while they got started. The group took the remainder of the school year to pray about it and in August of 1985, SCS opened with 65 children in grades K-6 and employed 10 teachers. It grew steadily from that point, adding a grade level each year.

As the school grew, it added a school board, a parent advisory council, parent-teacher fellowship, and continued to grow in both staff and students. By 1991, SCS had its first graduating class of 7 students. The school had grown to 120 students by that time and was getting too big to use the church. It needed a real gymnasium and science labs in particular. An elementary school that had been closed by the public school district was located and SCS developed a capital campaign to raise money to purchase and remodel the building. The school was paying rent to the sponsoring church by this time but it was able to raise the necessary funds within two years. By the fall of 1993, SCS moved into the newly redesigned facility and the enrollment jumped to 187 that fall. Several grades had a waiting list the previous year but with full-sized classrooms, almost all the students were able to be accommodated.

Along with a full-sized gym, locker rooms, and science labs, other specialized rooms were able to be specially equipped, like music and art rooms, a library, and a computer lab. Teachers were delighted that they did not have to store their materials away each Friday afternoon and they felt like the teaching/learning environment improved significantly. The playground and outdoor gym areas were still in need of improvement and with the help of many parent volunteers, those took shape over the next 12 months. Parents volunteered to assist with some of the interior work that needed to be done to keep the costs down and many of the areas of the building were painted and decorated in a way that turned an older building into an attractive learning space. Students and families were blessed by the new facility. Tuition was raised to offset the cost of the building but with the amount of money that had been raised in the capital campaign, the loan was retired within five years, including the cost of remodeling.

In 2000, a preschool program was added to SCS, for 3 and 4 year olds. That created the need to add a second playground which was paid for completely through the income of the preschool program. That year, the school was accredited for the first time for K-12, with the ACSI REACH instrument only. The K-12 enrollment at that time was 243. (The preschool had 37.) Most grades averaged about 20 students per grade. There was a waiting list for some grades as there was a cap on lower elementary grades in the low 20's. Upper elementary had a cap of 24. Middle school had a cap of 26 per class and HS had a cap of 28 per class.

The school is financed primarily through tuition. Since 2000, there has been an increase in the amount of money dedicated to financial assistance. That is raised primarily through annual fundraisers. Parents and donors give specifically to that fund and come to those events knowing that they are giving for that purpose. Approximately 24% of the student body now receives some assistance, although not all of that is through the school. SCS connects families to several funds from private foundations as well.

The international population of the school has increased over the past ten years. Originally the few international students were from Korea but now the majority come from China. Typically about 7-10% of the high school students are international students. These students pay full tuition and are usually not coming from Christian

families. They come through agents who are well aware that SCS is a Christian school and they assist in communicating with families about the nature of the school and its expectations. Several of these students come to know the Lord each year and while it is a challenge to educate them well because of how much work it entails, it is also a privilege and a blessing to those students and to the domestic students whose lives are touched by knowing someone of another culture.

Mission, Vision, and Future Goals

This portion includes the school's mission, vision, and goals for the future.

Since the beginning, the mission was focused on students Learning to Love, Learning to Learn, and Learning to Lead. The short version is Love, Learn, and Lead. Every student, parent, and staff member knows that mission and lives it whether that be in academics, co-curricular activities, or service/missions. Students are taught that these attributes are just as important when a stranger meets you in a store or when you are seen with the word "Christian" on your jersey on the court. It is something that happens when you are alone in your room, searching the Internet, or on the stage representing your school. It pertains to who you are inside as well as outside.

The vision of the school is to impact the world with students who have been transformed by this love, who are lifelong learners, and who are prepared to lead this next generation. SCS wants to see every student reach their potential for Christ and they believe it will happen when they prepare them in all aspects with the skills and spiritual maturity necessary to experience success. SCS's vision is to create confident children of God who know their purpose, their calling, and their dependence on God.

Demographic Portrait

This section summarizes the demographic portrait provided by the school and what implications that information might have for future growth or accomplishments of students.

The size of Anytown (greater metropolitan area) is about 200,000 with an average age of 34. Approximately 18% of the population is school-aged. The average household income is $53,000. Ethnicity is Caucasian (78.6) Hispanic (12.1%), African-American (6.8%), Asian (2%) Other (.5%). The demographics of the school are slightly different with a Caucasian population of 80%, Asian 6%, Hispanic 5%, African-American 4%, Mixed Race 2%, Other 3%. The education level of the parents is typically college educated (over 2/3). Almost 30% of SCS households have someone with an advanced degree. Most households have two incomes. The families whose children attend SCS would definitely be above the norm in both income and education level. However, with the financial assistance available, SCS is able to accommodate a number of children from single parent families and the median income of families at the school has gone down over the past few years. While this makes donations even more important than in previous years, it means that the school is serving a broader segment of the community with Christian education and this is intentional by the board and administration.

The teaching staff at SCS has an average of 12 years of experience. Fifty-five percent have been at SCS for 5 years or more and Forty-three percent have been at SCS for 10 years or more. Sixty nine percent are females and 31% are males. Forty percent have advanced degrees. About 95% are certified through ACSI and many are state certified though that is not a requirement.

As was discussed in the Significant Changes section, the demographics of SCS has changed in the past five years. With those changes, some students have been admitted with lower academic readiness levels. This is one of the reasons staff was hired to support students with learning differences. The hiring of another staff person to work with international students and give them ELL support also impacts SCS's ability to support the international student population. These changes have allowed SCS to move toward its vision of increasing its outreach to

students in a wider audience that also would benefit from a Christian education while not compromising students' ability to reach their expected student outcomes.

Achievement of Academic Expected Student Outcomes

In this section, the team includes the accomplishments of the students in academic area of expected student outcomes. Information should present summary data, analysis, and an explanation of how they are used in setting school improvement goals. The visiting team has reviewed the Student Assessment Profile information from the self-study.

SCS administers the TerraNova3 each year in the spring for grades K-8. At the high school level, the EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT, and PSAT are administered because they are nationally recognized college preparatory tests. SCS also encourages students to take the SAT if the college they are pursuing prefers it, and they report those scores in their high school profiles. With the junior and senior level cumulative projects, students also have significant work to show for colleges/universities that allow non-testing alternatives.

Each grade level/department is responsible for aligning their curriculum to the SCS expected student outcomes and using the tests to gain the information they need to determine if they are reaching their objectives. They are prohibited from using any specific material that might be on a test but they are encouraged to analyze what is covered on the tests and rearrange the presentation of the material so that it provides the best sequence for students. Neither the test nor the purchased textbooks seemed to be driving what is determined as appropriate curriculum for SCS. Each department has decided what is best to teach, has designed their curriculum, and then chosen the most appropriate materials to accomplish their objectives.

An in-service is scheduled each year at the end of the year so that teachers have focused time to properly update student records and have time to analyze test scores with other teachers in their departments or at their grade levels. Data from these assessments is used to determine overall school achievement and individual performance. Choices for materials such as textbooks are not made final until department heads and principals have the standardized test information and any department mastery testing information that would be appropriate to review. Test results also inform decisions regarding grade placement and the need for remediation and curriculum emphasis for the following year.

While teachers identified time at the end of the year as the time they spent the most focused time on test results as a group, it was evident that they used test results for decision making throughout the school year. When asked to name a few areas, teachers mentioned class placement, screening, follow-up for individual students who were struggling, instructional and curricular decisions, purchasing, sequencing of instruction, grouping, and unit/lesson planning. The administration mentioned school improvement planning in addition to the items mentioned by teachers. There is also time allotted during the teacher preparation days in August for reviewing data as it pertains to the incoming students for each teacher.

The school supplied adequate documentation showing test results for all grades for the past three years comparing year over year at the same grade. They also showed individual classes and how they progressed over a period of three years. Individual student data is analyzed each year to see if students are making a year's progress in 12 months. Those who have not are put on a watch list and parents are contacted for a conference. Depending on when test results are received, those conferences happen in the fall (PSAT), or spring (TerraNova), or summer, if the lack of progress is a combination of grades/test scores/mastery scores.

Part of the administrative team meetings in June are used to follow-up the end-of-the-year data analysis day and a summary report is compiled at that time. The administrative team reviews the data to determine trends and the need for curricular adjustment. The testing results are summarized for the school board, placed on the website, and presented to the parents on the web in the Annual Report.

Achievement of Non-Academic Expected Student Outcomes

In this section, the team includes the accomplishments of the students in the other areas of expected student outcomes: spiritual, physical, social, and emotional. Information should present summary data, analysis, and an explanation of how they are used in setting school improvement or program goals.

In addition to the academic achievement, the other expected student outcomes are measured throughout the grade levels. Each grade has been assigned four assessments to measure each year from the non-academic areas of expected student outcomes. These assessments are agreed upon by the teacher, the campus level staff, and the administration, and together they represent all of the areas of the expected student outcomes. The teaching staff plans the assessments right in the daily activities and students are aware of their importance. Some are graded with letter grades and others are pass/fail. Some are reflective pieces which are graded with pre-designed rubrics so that year by year teachers can see what levels students have reached in their thinking on a certain topic. These are grade level appropriate and when all put together, develop a clear picture of a student developing a heart for "learning to love, learning to learn, and learning to lead."

In the section on Learning to Love, several of the competencies mention learning to love God, and learning to share the love of God with others. One of the assessments in second grade about loving God is a "Why do I love God?" project. Most students make a poster with words or pictures of what they are thankful for. Some students get creative and use photos or other ways to represent some of the things they are thankful for. However, this follows a unit on the attributes of God. The rubric for this activity gives full credit to students who show some of the attributes of God and not only "things" God has given them. The unit has helped students gain a bigger picture of who God is and gives them an appreciation of how he loves us. (all-knowing, all-merciful, forgiving, patient, God is love) One of the assessments for the next grade (third grade) concentrates on being able to tell others about God's love. This adds the component of knowing that God loves each of us, has died for our sins, forgives us, and has made a way to welcome us as sons and daughters. Again, the assessment measures that students are able to express those truths in some way to one another…it may be through words, pictures, skit, etc. This same competency might be measured again in the ninth grade, but the rubric would be completely different and would add components of apologetics. Other ESOs evaluated may be how students work cooperatively with others, or appreciate that everyone is created unique and yet in God's image, and so on. These truths are translated into activities where students can express what they are learning and thinking and those are captured and evaluated for growth. In this way, the school is measuring how well a certain student or group of students is progressing on the non-academic outcomes that have been identified as important indicators of progress in these areas.

There are two times that students become focused on these expected student outcomes more specifically. As juniors, they shadow someone in whose career they are interested in, and one section of the final paper for that activity asks them to take one aspect of the mission statement, and develop it according to the SCS's expected student outcome competencies. The juniors work through those competencies and discuss how those would be able to be developed in the career they are examining.

As seniors, students tackle a big question from a list of possible options. One example question might be "Are the heathen really lost?" One aspect of answering that question is to examine how they, personally, could show one of the three aspects of the mission statement through their answer. (Learn to love, learn to learn, learn to lead) Again, they have to address all the competencies of whichever one they choose in that section of their final project. They might address how this question will affect their career choice or how it might influence who they become as a leader. The senior project is presented to a group of three adults. Two are faculty members and one is an adult guest. The grade for this project goes into their Senior Bible class grade so the students take it seriously and it has the reputation of preparing students for college level presentations. The expected student outcomes are assessed by the principal and it figures prominently into his/her report to the superintendent.

Each grade level teacher reports these academic and non-academic assessments to their principal. The principal analyzes them and along with the teacher, decides if any adjustments need to be made for the current or coming year in terms of interventions, instruction, or goals. Eventually, all reports are combined and the superintendent presents the analysis of the results of all the assessments as her report on the attainment of the expected student outcomes. A summary of this is prepared for the school board, posted on the website, and becomes part of the Annual Report.

Standard 1 - Philosophy and Foundations

Indicator 1.1 (CI)

The statement of faith and the philosophy, mission, vision, core values, and schoolwide expected student outcome statements of the school are established and are reviewed regularly and systematically in a collaborative manner. (C)

Compliance (C): The school has developed a statement of faith along with philosophy, mission, vision, core values, and schoolwide expected student outcome statements. The leadership of the school has developed a systematic review process for these statements, and feedback from stakeholders is considered when evaluating the statements.

Indicator 1.2

The school communicates its philosophy, mission, vision, and core values statements and schoolwide expected student outcomes to its constituents and community. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The school thoroughly and frequently communicates foundational statements orally and in print (displayed) to all constituents and community. There is evidence of understanding and support from stakeholders.

Indicator 1.3 (CI)

The foundational documents are consistently applied as an integrative, coordinating, and examining device throughout all aspects of the programs, operations, and curriculum. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): Stakeholders knowledgeably discuss the foundational documents and affirm the importance of the purpose of the school.

Indicator 1.4

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

Exceeds Compliance (EC): All staff are committed to and consistently look for opportunities to advance the philosophy, mission, and vision of the school.

Indicator 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). (C)

Compliance (C): The school demonstrates a commitment to the development of the whole child from a distinctly

Christian perspective, focusing on the following: Spiritually•growth in Christ; Intellectually• instruction/learning •moving forward• for all the students; Physically•health, nutrition, and lifelong fitness; Socially/Emotionally•wholesome interactions

Standard 1 Overview

The following narrative provides an overview of "what is" in relation to this standard. The team refers to evidence or examples regarding the school's compliance to the standard in their comments.

At the time of the last accreditation, the school board and administrative leadership realized the need for more frequent review of the schools' foundational documents. The first fall retreat for the board after the previous accreditation visit was entirely devoted to this. It was at this time that the leadership decided to increase the scope of who it was serving.

After review, they did not change the mission of the school. They did, however, slightly change the vision of the school and it became more all-encompassing. The leadership now had a vision for less fortunate in the community and students coming from around the world that didn't know Christ. This change in focus caused a few minor changes in the philosophy statement and the expected student outcomes. Some policies were changed as well to give more flexibility to the superintendent to admit students whose parents were not Christians. This had occurred prior to five years ago but as the leadership reviewed their policies, they realized that this practice went against some of the strict policies that were in place.

SCS has made a conscious effort to communicate the school's statement of faith, philosophy, vision, mission, core values, and expected student outcomes to its community and stakeholders. In an effort to ensure that these components have an integral and effective part in the uniqueness and functionality of the school, they have used various tools for this communication. These documents are widely distributed through their policy manual, handbooks, parent nights, website, and have become a driving force in the culture of the school.

SCS's leadership has created the foundational and philosophical documents to have a clear impact on the way the school is run. After meeting with parents there was ample evidence to attest to the school's report on using their foundational documents as an influence to assist the school in achieving its goals. Although parents and teachers are clear that the leadership has increased its vision on who ought to be served, not all teachers seem equally prepared to serve students coming from more varied backgrounds.

Commendations

Each commendation has two parts: A. the statement declares the positive behavior or action the school has taken and the beneficial result that is related. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Commendation #1

The executive leadership completed a thorough review of its philosophy, vision, mission, expected student outcomes, and admissions policies of the school resulting in a more accurate reflection of who the school had become as it embraced a vision of becoming more inclusive for those who could benefit from a Christian education. (Indicator 1.1)

With the desire to admit more children of single parent families, those on financial assistance, and more international students, the school's executive leadership reviewed and revised all of the applicable policies that had become out of sync with its new vision. This comprehensive review and revision was thoughtfully done and included staff and parents. (interviews with staff, parents, administrators, and board; minutes from board

meetings)

Recommendations

Each recommendation has two parts: A. the statement declares needed improvement the school should take and the beneficial result that would be realized. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Recommendation #1

Assess the needs of the current staff in their ability to develop the whole child, (spiritually, intellectually, physically, and emotionally), in order to provide any specific training needed to address weaknesses found. (Indicator 1.5)

With the increase of students from different cultural backgrounds and some lower readiness levels being admitted, it appears that not all teachers are equally equipped to handle those challenges in the classroom. Targeted professional development may be needed for some individual teachers. (classroom observation; teacher and administrator interviews; Self-Study, Standard 1, pp. 25-26.)

Adherence to the Standard

The following is the visiting team's rating of the school's compliance with the standard. If the school is not compliant on any critical indicator, there must be a corresponding recommendation for each one.

C (Compliant)

Standard 2 - Governance and Executive Leadership

Indicator 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 and training. (C)n

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The governing body has an extended history of effective functioning within their board role and provides significant evidence that they function in that role at an exemplary level, including an annual, formal, written board self-evaluation in which all board members participate. The governing board has an extended history of demonstrating best practices in their relationship and functioning with the head of school.

Indicator 2.2 (CI)

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. (C)

Compliance (C): 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 as evidenced in the signed statement of faith.

Indicator 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. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The annual written evaluation of the head of school is based on fulfillment of the job description, annual written objectives, compliance with the ongoing professional growth plan, and the value that the leader has brought to the organization. The head of school has provided input during the evaluation process, and the board meets personally with the head of school to review the evaluation. Evaluation is a positive experience, and it stimulates professional and organizational growth that is supported in the budget.

Indicator 2.4

Constituents and stakeholders are given opportunities to provide feedback to leadership regarding decisions of the school, a practice that promotes a culture of participation and transparency. (C)

Compliance (C): Constituents and stakeholders have ongoing opportunities to provide feedback regarding the decisions of the school. Feedback provides stakeholders and leaders opportunities for healthy dialog and to strengthen communication throughout the school community. The school has written policies that ensure integrity in decision making and limit conflict of interest for all involved in the school.

Indicator 2.5 (CI)

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. (C)

Compliance (C): Written policies and procedures exist to promote effective operations. Bylaws and all policy manuals are current. The financial requirements of the continuous school improvement plan are incorporated in the annual budget and/or capital improvement plan. Legal documents are prepared, filed, and secured by legal counsel.

Indicator 2.6 (CI)

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. (C)

Compliance (C): An admissions policy is in place whereby students whose educational and/or developmental needs can be met in the existing programs are admitted. Admission criteria are clearly communicated to prospective families. The school has identified the needs of students that have been admitted, and it consistently meets those needs.

Indicator 2.7 (CI)

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. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The school provides stake-holders an opportunity to interact with leadership regarding financial information. The school•s resources enable it to expand programs that are consistent with its mission.

Indicator 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. (C)

Partial Compliance (PC): The budget is developed on a year-to-year basis to determine tuition and salaries, but it is not used as an ongoing management tool. Not all fiscal aspects of the school are reflected in the financial documents. The program heads are invited to participate in the budgeting process, but they have limited ability to influence decisions.

Indicator 2.9 (CI)

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. (See *Options for Meeting Indicator 2.9* **for details.) (C)**

Compliance (C): A review of finances is conducted in a timely fashion and at the level recommended in the chart provided on Options for Meeting Indicator 2.9. The review is conducted by an external CPA.

Indicator 2.10

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

Compliance (C): Just compensation packages are written, reviewed, and adequate for meeting the financial needs of staff. Just compensation packages of local and regional schools were considered in the development of benefits, and benefits were based on equitable recognition of training and level(s) of responsibility.

Indicator 2.11 (CI)*

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

Compliance (C): Compliance is reflected in appropriate policies, and where indicated, appropriate certificates and licenses are posted. The school is in good standing with regulatory agencies including, but not limited to, the areas of employment practices, tax compliance, or other use of funding. Regulatory documents (including reports of inspections, approvals, and corrected deficiencies) are maintained on file.

Standard 2 Overview

The following narrative provides an overview of "what is" in relation to this standard. The team refers to evidence or examples regarding the school's compliance to the standard in their comments.

SCS has made a strong commitment to choose and maintain a godly and professional leadership team. The character of these leaders has ensured the distinctive of a biblical worldview in all areas of operation. The school board holds itself accountable by a set of policies which delineate its responsibilities and practices systematic self-evaluation. They meet monthly for board business and they also meet monthly for prayer.

A balanced relationship exists between the school board and head of school by staying within the scope of job descriptions for each. The school board functions as a governing board and empowers the superintendent with the operation of the school. A regular evaluation of the superintendent is conducted by the board. It is a thorough evaluation with input from those who report to her on a rotating bi-annual basis.

Professional policies and practices by the school leadership team ensure financial stability within the school. The controller and board finance committee monitor the financial condition and regularly provide an independent audit. A report is given to the entire board by the controller each month that has been reviewed by the financial committee in detail with the superintendent.

The board has a unique but thorough method of training board members. Each new board member is actually "in training" for their first year and they do not vote. They meet for 30 minutes prior to the first six meetings with a mentor who goes through the policies that will be covered that evening. They also have some pages in the manual that they have agreed to read. That way, the concepts of governance, the specific policies, and the various processes of the board are learned while the new board member is able to observe, listen, and learn.

After the first year, they must receive a vote of affirmation by the rest of the board to become full board members.

Commendations

Each commendation has two parts: A. the statement declares the positive behavior or action the school has taken and the beneficial result that is related. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Commendation #1

The governing board has created an effective process of board training, ensuring that board members are adequately trained before assuming their duties or voting on policy decisions. (Indicator 2.1)

The board has a very thorough process of board training. New members are actually "in training" their first year, working with a mentor before they ever get a chance to vote. They must receive a vote of affirmation by the other board members before they are officially placed on the board. (interviews with board members, administration; review of board minutes)

Commendation #2

The governing board completes a thorough written annual evaluation of the superintendent annually and biannually, includes staff input from a variety of people who reports to him. (Indicator 2.3)

The school board takes their responsibility to evaluate the superintendent seriously. They provide helpful written feedback every year with positive comments as well as some areas in which he can continue to improve. Every other year, they solicit anonymous input from her direct reports to ensure that they have the pulse of the people with whom he works every day. (interviews with superintendent, board members, other administrators/staff; sample Head of School evaluations)

Commendation #3

Financial resources are available to fulfill the mission and programs of the school. Decisions regarding what is purchased for the school go through a thorough process and all financial dealings are adequately disclosed to the stakeholders. (Indicator 2.7)

All financial practices were undertaken with integrity. Several layers of scrutiny were built into decision making at the level of purchasing and other decision making such as hiring. All finances were reviewed by the controller and the finance committee of the board with the idea that the board was responsible for fiduciary oversight but not day-to-day decision making. Good communication occurred through annual reports to the constituents. (review of financial reports; board minutes; administrative and parent interviews; Annual Report)

Recommendations

Each recommendation has two parts: A. the statement declares needed improvement the school should take and the beneficial result that would be realized. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Recommendation #1

Examine a variety of fundraising opportunities for the purpose of decreasing the dependence on a single fundraiser each year for funding financial assistance. (Indicator 2.8)

As the needs increase for financial assistance, the burden for raising those funds continues to fall on one event. Staff and administration both are concerned that a single event is not going to be able to sustain the current funding level and other avenues or events will need to be generated. (interviews with administration, staff; fundraising budget)

Adherence to the Standard

The following is the visiting team's rating of the school's compliance with the standard. If the school is not compliant on any critical indicator, there must be a corresponding recommendation for each one.

C (Compliant)

Standard 3 - Home and Community Relations and Student Services

Indicator 3.1 (CI)

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

Compliance (C): Enrollment is sufficient to operate as a viable school, meet the needs of students, and operate with financial stability.

Indicator 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, (4) family income and vocation. (C)

Compliance (C): The school conducts regular, comprehensive demographic assessments, and it has used some of its constituent responses in order to better fulfill its stated mission.

Indicator 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. (E/S)

Compliance (C): The length of the school day and year, including the number of instructional hours and days, complies with applicable laws.

Indicator 3.4

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

Compliance (C): A variety of established, effective two-way communication occurs between the school and its constituents.

Indicator 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. (C)

Compliance (C): 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.

Indicator 3.6

The school systematically seeks input/feedback from parents, staff, and current and past students in order to adjust its instructional and operational practices. Survey data is regularly gathered and analyzed for feedback regarding program satisfaction. (See Appendix E in the Standards Manual.) (C)

Compliance (C): The school systematically seeks input/feedback from parents, staff, and current and past students to provide information regarding the learning process. Surveys are distributed to constituents at least every three years. Results are analyzed for feedback regarding program satisfaction. EE programs systematically seek input/feedback from families, rather than current and past students, to provide information regarding the learning process using the survey and analysis process at least every three years.

Indicator 3.7 (CI)*

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

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The school intentionally goes beyond the statement to embrace the diversity of the school culture and make an impact for the kingdom of Christ.

Indicator 3.8

Guidance services are provided at age-appropriate levels and communicated to families. High school guidance services provide academic course selection along with college and career planning. (E/S)

Compliance (C): Guidance services are provided at age-appropriate levels and communicated to families. High school guidance services provide academic course counseling along with college and career planning. The school has effective communication with families regarding all guidance services provided by the school.

Indicator 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. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The process to identify and support students with learning differences is well executed for struggling students as well as the gifted and those with social/emo•tional challenges. Frequent examples exist throughout the school of differentiated instruction allowing students to learn at their own levels, pursue areas of interest, and demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. Support is provided through class•room intervention or special staff hired to focus on small groups or individuals. Training in these areas is provided for teachers.

Indicator 3.10 (CI)

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

Partial Compliance (PC): Student records are maintained but are difficult to reference. There are no accessibility limits, and they are in a nonsecure location.

Indicator 3.11

The school has a written plan in place for the transfer of student records to an appropriate accredited school, association, or local school district in the event of closure. (C)

Compliance (C): The school has a written plan in place for the transfer of student records to an appropriate accredited school, association, or local school district in the event of closure.

Indicator 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. (E/S)

Compliance (C): Student activities are consistent with the mission of the school, are a balanced variety, and are reflective of the needs of all students.

Standard 3 Overview

The following narrative provides an overview of "what is" in relation to this standard. The team refers to evidence or examples regarding the school's compliance to the standard in their comments.

SCS values the relationship with its parents and holds to the belief that true Christian education occurs best when the school, home, and church work in concert with one another. Building and fostering positive relationships with parents begins with the application and interview process. All applicant families are interviewed by one of the administrators at which time parents are asked to share their faith journey. During this interview, the SCS philosophy of education is thoroughly explained and parents are asked if they are able to support this philosophy. A pastoral recommendation and a commitment to church attendance are required for admission. If the family cannot clearly articulate their faith, they are asked to meet with the chaplain and he makes a recommendation to the admissions committee regarding the parents' spiritual commitment.

With 296 students in K-12, SCS is certainly viable in enrollment. It had been 340 at its highest point before the online schools came into the city. Enrollment at this point seems to be fairly steady and may even be growing a little again. The length of the school day exceeds the state-mandated hours of instruction.

Communication between SCS and the home is consistent and multi-dimensional. The web-based grading program allows parents to view their child's grades, 3rd grade and higher. SCS uses Facebook and its website as tools for communicating with parents and showcasing the school. Parents receive weekly e-mail communications targeted for their child's level (EE, ES, MS, HS). Elementary parents also receive a weekly letter from their child's teacher with items such as spelling lists, reminders about field trips, etc. Parent conferences are held twice each year. Report cards are issued during the fall conferences, requiring that parents attend to receive their child's grades. Teachers are available by e-mail and they are willing to set up times to meet with parents individually as needed. All-school face-to-face meetings happen twice a year for parents and usually involve a social event as well as something that is informational.

The Matthew 18 Principle is used to resolve conflict throughout the school. If a conflict cannot be resolved using this principle, the two parties must agree to a third party reconciliation meeting.

An alumni Facebook page is maintained by the school and through this social media SCS has been able to interact with former students and their families. Contact with alumni is still sparse for some grades and they have expressed a goal to improve this. A survey was was given to the alumni for the first time in quite a while, this past

year. It did not cover all the areas that the school hopes to cover in the future, such as the achievement of expected student outcomes.

SCS is very thorough on its standardized testing program. That is detailed on the website and the sharing of scores is clear. They have results that are a plus for their marketing and they showcase how well their students do in college with testimonials and mini-surveys.

The application process includes academic screening in language arts and math. Students that are accepted but need remediation may be accepted if they are within a few grade levels of their age group. A Response to Intervention (RtI) model is being used at the elementary and middle school for those with special needs and has just recently been initiated at the high school.

One full-time counselor (female) is employed at the high school for college and career counseling. A part-time chaplain also works with the guidance counselor to help students with social and emotional issues. He was trained in seminary to do some spiritual and emotional counseling. If the issues a female student has seem most appropriate for a female counselor, the guidance counselor works with that student. Students that need multiple sessions are referred to professionals in the community. Parents and students did not seem to understand how to access counseling for social/emotional issues according to the survey results.

A wide variety of student activities are offered such as sports, drama, vocal and instrumental music, debate, National Honor Society and several clubs. Students also have many opportunities to minister in the community through the service and missions programs which are organized primarily by the chaplain. Many are also student-led.

The EE program did a good job with conferences for students. The director also made herself available to talk with parents who had concerns. New parents especially expressed appreciation for the follow-up they received from the director as their children were getting to know their new teachers and the overall program.

Commendations

Each commendation has two parts: A. the statement declares the positive behavior or action the school has taken and the beneficial result that is related. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Commendation #1

Processes are in place to identify and serve special needs students during the admissions process and after admissions if they begin to struggle, through the RtI model. (Indicator 3.9)

The admissions process thoroughly screens, tests, and allows the school to identify which students have learning needs and determine if the school will be able to meet those needs. The special needs teacher is part of the admissions committee at all levels (ES, MS, and HS.) This process is operating especially well at the elementary and middle school levels. (interviews with teachers, administrators, parents, students, observation; admission committee minutes)

Commendation #2

The Early Education program does an exceptional job of making new children feel welcome and bond with their teachers. (Indicator 3.14)

The director and the teachers welcome the entire family to the early education classes for as long as it takes for the child to feel "at home" in their class. At each level, there are procedures in place to initiate children to classroom, other children, and regular activities. The older children are assigned a special buddy, are given a choice of toys and other privileges during their first few days, and the other children are taught to welcome

newcomers with open arms. (classroom observation; interviews with staff and parents; Self-study, standard 4, pg. 52)

Recommendations

Each recommendation has two parts: A. the statement declares needed improvement the school should take and the beneficial result that would be realized. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Recommendation #1

Seek input from current and past students and analyze results for the purpose of improving instruction and operational procedures. (Indicator 3.6)

The school has not completed a comprehensive alumni survey for more than five years. One was was given prior to this accreditation visit but it was not as thorough as the school would like it to be. A comprehensive survey of alumni is needed to address general and instructional satisfaction, other expected student outcomes, and spiritual formation issues. (interviews with administrative staff; Self-Study, Standard 3, pp. 37)

Recommendation #2

Communicate the availability of counseling services for social/emotional issues at the high school through the guidance counselor and the chaplain so that students can locate help if they need it to remove barriers for learning. (Indicator 3.10)

While some students were referred to the guidance counselor and/or the chaplain by staff, it became clear that many students and parents did not know those services were available. When asked if they would meet with those two people, students and parents answered positively. It appears that this service would be well-received and needs to be communicated better. (interviews with students/parents, administration, guidance counselor, chaplain; Survey results from parents and students)

Adherence to the Standard

The following is the visiting team's rating of the school's compliance with the standard. If the school is not compliant on any critical indicator, there must be a corresponding recommendation for each one.

C (Compliant)

Standard 4 - Personnel

Indicator 4.1 (CI)

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. (See *Guidelines for Outside Contracted Teachers or Instructors***.) (C)**

Compliance (C): Every 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.

Indicator 4.2 (CI)

The executive leadership of the school ensures staff members know and understand the ethical considerations of their respective positions. Examples include: appropriate student/teacher relationships, confidentiality with student information, and use of copyrighted material. (C)

Compliance (C): Staff handbooks and staff training enable staff members to know and understand the ethical considerations of their respective positions.

Indicator 4.3 (CI)*

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. (See the *EE Annual Staff Training Guidelines***.) (C)**

Compliance (C): 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 staff have contact with students.

Indicator 4.4 (CI)

The K–12 head of school and all K–12 principals hold an ACSI administrative certificate (or current state, national, provincial administrative certificate, plus Christian philosophy and Bible requirements*). (Other administrators, such as academic deans, directors of curriculum and instruction, assistant principals, etc. may be included with the teacher and professional staff certification required in Indicator 4.6.) (E/S)

Compliance (C): The head of school and all K-12 principals have current administrative certificates.

Indicator 4.6 (CI)

A minimum of 80 percent of K–12 faculty, which includes professional positions such as guidance counselors, athletic directors, library/media specialist, etc., based on full-time equivalents (FTEs), hold current ACSI certification (or current state, national, provincial certificate, plus Christian philosophy and Bible requirements*). (See *Guidelines for Outside Contracted Teachers and Instructors***.) (E/S)**

Compliance (C): Eighty percent or more of the teachers, based on FTEs, hold a current certificate.

Indicator 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 biblical studies and the Christian philosophy of education. (E/S)

Compliance (C): Professional development for K•12 faculty, guidance personnel, informational resources staff, and other appropriate staff is ongoing and integral to the school and is aligned with specific goals and instructional programs, and it includes training in biblical studies and the Christian philosophy of education.

Indicator 4.8

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

Partial Compliance (PC): There are some policies and procedures in place regarding faculty/staff employment and separation from service, or they are not regularly reviewed, or personnel files are not maintained in an appropriate manner in keeping with their confidential nature and applicable legal requirements.

Indicator 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. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): Executive leadership follows a clearly defined plan for a variety of ongoing evaluations of faculty and staff. The plan is collaboratively developed, provides for feedback, is well documented, and is driven by a desire for growth and professional development. Evaluations may include peer review and input from stakeholders. A systematic implementation of professional development is linked to professional goals.

Indicator 4.10

The number and professional preparation of instructional and support staff is sufficient for the scope of the school. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): Instructional/Administration: Staffing for extra and/or cocurricular activities is done by non- or additional instructional staff, thereby allowing individual and corporate planning time for instructional staff. Clerical: To meet the demand of special projects, clerical staff can be supplemented, or hours can be increased. Custodial: Supplementary custodial and maintenance staff are available to meet facility needs that occur as part of special events or at the beginning of the school year.

Indicator 4.11

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

Compliance (C): A significant majority of teachers participate in regularly scheduled learning communities or other opportunities for collaboration. The agenda for these meetings contributes to a reflective, problem-solving culture which is focused on student learning, school ethos, or other conditions that affect student learning.

Standard 4 Overview

The following narrative provides an overview of "what is" in relation to this standard. The team refers to evidence or examples regarding the school's compliance to the standard in their comments.

SCS recognizes that faculty and staff are the "living curriculum." Spiritual integrity and academic rigor are vital to carrying out the vision and mission of the school, and therefore SCS is very intentional in their selection of administration, faculty and staff. Every employee must include their personal testimony when completing an employment application and share verbally during the interview process. All employees and parents are required to sign a biblical lifestyle statement and covenant annually.

SCS faculty hold bachelor's degrees in their field of teaching and over 95 percent hold ACSI certification. One hundred percent of the administrative team are ACSI certified. The number of instructional staff is more than sufficient for the scope of the school. An annual review of staffing needs is conducted by the entire leadership team prior to offering contracts and making staffing assignments each spring.

Professional development is encouraged at SCS. Both corporate and individual opportunities are available to teachers. Feedback from staff, analysis of student achievement data, and administrator input serve as the basis for determining corporate professional development for the year. Each faculty member has a meeting early in the school year, or the end of the previous year, when they establish annual growth goals. At that meeting, the documents reviewed are the teacher's self-assessment, the goals and evaluations from the previous year, and any observations that were made. An individualized plan for professional development is determined with information from this meeting along with consideration of schoolwide goals/initiatives. The Director of Curriculum gets a copy of all goals set for all teachers by the end of September so that she can plan professional development activities for the year. It was noted that several of the professional development opportunities offered choices to teachers and those seemed to be based on a needs analysis from the goal setting sheets received.

A few new positions have been created in the past five years. Special needs staff has been added at the elementary, middle, and high school. Recently, one person has been added to the high school that teaches ELL and is the international student coordinator half-time.

Evaluations of administrators, faculty and staff are completed annually. Non-teaching staff are evaluated by the head of their department, teachers are evaluated informally and formally by the building principals, building principals are evaluated by the superintendent, and the superintendent is evaluated by the board of education. Faculty evaluations consist of a formal observation, a written evaluation, a self-evaluation and at least one meeting to discuss performance and goals. It was noted that while a process exists for coaches' evaluations, good records for those evaluations could not be located. It was not clear if 100% of those evaluations had been done and not properly filed or had not been done. There has been a change in the athletic director position and neither electronic records nor paper copies were complete.

Background checks have been in place for professional staff for many years. They have been added for all classroom volunteers and volunteer assistant coaches, special event volunteers, field trip drivers, and even occasional office helpers for the past three years. Through the course of the visit, it became evident that the school needed to do a better job of keeping records on the background checks for field trip drivers in a single location. Records also were not complete on who had completed the school's orientation because they lacked a central repository of information. Some of the drivers were being asked to do a second or third background check because their records were on file at a different campus or with the athletic department. A plan had already been implemented before the team arrived. Though compliance was marked regarding background checks and orientation occurring, a recommendation was made to improve record keeping.

The non-instructional staff were exemplary in their commitment to the school and to their individual responsibilities. It seemed that on occasion, they worked off the clock in order to not exceed the 40 hour work week limit and to avoid overtime. It appears that supervisors were not aware of this practice. Since this is against employment law, a plan has been developed to closely monitor those hours and allow for some overtime if warranted.

One area the EE program was lagging behind in was in professional development. SCS had recently purchased ACSI's Principles and Practices DVD but had not made time for all the teachers to watch it. SCS does have a permanent sub for the EE program. As a result of this accreditation visit, the director has assigned staff to rotate through with available sub time, whenever possible and watch portions of PnP DVD. Having the permanent sub has been a real strength for SCS as the children have had a substitute who is familiar with the routine, teaching techniques, curriculum, and children themselves when their regular teacher is not able to be with them. If no one is absent, the sub rotates into the schedule and the regular teachers use the time for additional projects and advanced planning that they normally don't have opportunities for. Sometimes this allows for collaboration with teachers that teach common age levels or it may allow a teacher to attend a staffing for a student that is struggling.

Commendations

Each commendation has two parts: A. the statement declares the positive behavior or action the school has taken and the beneficial result that is related. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Commendation #1

Complete annual evaluations are done on all levels for all faculty and administration, including self-evaluation and a goal setting review. (Indicator 4.9)

A complete cycle of evaluation is accomplished for all faculty and administration. For faculty, this includes at least one observation in the classroom as well. Some of those may include peer-to-peer observations and conferencing. This process was well-documented and all documents were properly signed and filed. (review of evaluation documents; interviews with faculty and administration)

Commendation #2

The process by which the number of instructional staff is determined each year is thorough and helps keeps budgets in line with changing needs. (Indicator 4.10)

The administration works with the department heads in a multi-layered approach to determining the needs for staff based on student enrollment, course requests, changes in student needs (ELL, special needs, etc.) and this is reviewed several times during the spring as letters of intent and then contracts are given out. Communication is forthright to the teaching staff and the process seems to be clear and yield the best possible result for both teachers and the school. (interviews with administration and faculty; review of planning documents)

Commendation #3

Professional development for K-12 faculty is based on an annual assessment of needs taken from goal setting documents the teachers and administrators have developed and which are aligned to individual and schoolwide goals. (Indicator 4.7)

Standard procedures at all levels produce goal setting sheets on which faculty have identified individual goals. These come from examining self-assessments, evaluations, observations, and any other relevant information the principal or teacher believes is helpful. In addition, professional development activities are aligned to schoolwide

goals or initiatives in order to help faculty reach objectives which the school believes are strategic for improved teaching/learning. (interviews with teachers, administrators; goal setting sheets)

Recommendations

Each recommendation has two parts: A. the statement declares needed improvement the school should take and the beneficial result that would be realized. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Recommendation #1

Complete evaluations for all coaching staff and ensure that the copies are properly signed and filed in the coaches' personnel files to comply with school policy. (Indicator 4.9)

It was evident that many evaluations of coaches were conducted but there was no consistency in whether those were in the individual coach's personnel file, found on a server, or located in some other location. The electronic copies were not signed and in those cases, there was no record if the evaluations had been received or if there had been an opportunity for comment. The process for delivering the evaluation, obtaining signed copies, and then filing those in the personnel file needs to be established. (interviews with Athletic Director, coaches, and HR Director; examples of coaching evaluations)

Recommendation #2

Monitor the work week for the hourly staff to ensure they are not violating school policy and employment law. (Indicator 4.8)

Some hourly employees were aware that working "off the clock" was not allowed at the school and that it was a violation of employment law. However, they stated that they did it because they wanted to get the job done and did not want to go over their allotted hours. Supervisors have developed a plan to monitor overtime hours and issue prior approval when an employee needs to work additional hours to complete a project. (interviews with hourly employees, administration; review of the faculty/staff handbook)

Recommendation #3

Properly record and file appropriate screening/background checks and orientation sessions for all volunteers so that duplication and multiple requests does not occur. (Indicator 4.11)

SCS had been requiring background checks and orientation for volunteers for several years but the results were not kept in a centralized location so that they could be accessed as needed. As a result, some parents/volunteers have been asked to redo background checks multiple times causing frustration and
unnecessary expense. A centralized system managed by the human resource office has been designed and is in process of being implemented. The plan should be completed by the beginning of the new school year. (interviews with volunteers, administrators, HR director, and faculty; review of volunteer application and training materials)

Recommendation #4

Require that 80 percent of teachers and teacher assistants complete ACSI's Principles and Practices of Christian Early Education course. (Indicator 4.7c)

SCS had recently purchased ACSI's Principles and Practices DVD but had not made time for all the teachers to watch it. They were only at 70% compliance on completing that course. The EE Director has developed a plan utilizing the EE program's permanent sub and if followed, they should be in compliance by September 1 of this year. (interviews with staff, EE Director; Self-study EE section Standard 5, pg. 122)

Adherence to the Standard

The following is the visiting team's rating of the school's compliance with the standard. If the school is not compliant on any critical indicator, there must be a corresponding recommendation for each one.

PC (Partially Compliant)

Explanation of partial or noncompliance

If the school is partially or noncompliant, please write a brief statement indicating why they are not compliant. Include a recommendation addressing the issue in the Recommendations section.

A plan to monitor and pre-approve overtime hours of staff was put in place immediately, which will take care of the concerns for Indicator 4.8.

Standard 5 - Instructional Program and Resources (5.1-5.10)

Indicator 5.1 (CI)

The curriculum documents developed by the school provide a well-documented biblical basis for all courses consistent with the goal of developing a biblical worldview in students. (See*Guidelines for Accepting Credits from Other Sources.*) (C)

Compliance (C): Curriculum guides/maps are comprehensive and provide a well-documented biblical basis for all courses consistent with developing a biblical worldview in students.

Indicator 5.2 (CI)

The curriculum guides/maps drive the instructional program. The guides/maps are current and include the following components: 1) schoolwide expected student outcomes, 2) course goals and objectives, 3) biblical integration concepts, 4) school-selected standards, 5) resources, 6) time allotted for each unit, 7) instructional methods, and 8) assessments. A document, often called a Scope and Sequence, is avail-able to guide the overall curriculum plan through electronic means (curriculum mapping software) or a traditional written format.

The guides/maps are accessible to all faculty and inform instruction that clearly values the development of the whole child—spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially. (See Appendix H in the Standards Manual regarding initial vs. renewal visit expectations.) (E/S)

Partial Compliance (PC): The curriculum guides/ maps are somewhat developed, but several of the requirements are not included. There is little or only anecdotal evidence the curriculum addresses the developmental needs of the whole child. The curriculum documents are not readily accessible to the faculty. The instructional program is highly textbook driven and not curriculum driven. A curriculum review process exists, but it is not consistently followed.

Indicator 5.3 (CI)

Bible content and instruction are required in the core curriculum. (E/S)

Compliance (C): A Bible course is required for each student every term of attendance or, due to a varied school class schedule, its equivalent amount of time in a year. Instruction is built on a well-developed scope and sequence. Bible curriculum includes all the elements described in Indicator 5.2. Instructional strategies are consistent with other courses.

Indicator 5.4

The school systematically evaluates its instructional strategies, learning activities, and instructional technology, ensuring that these are research-based and that they reflect sound educational practice. (C)

Compliance (C): A process is in place to effectively evaluate the school learning environment to ensure that it is

conducive to the instruction and development of the whole child.

Indicator 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. (E/S)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The school is utilizing and widely implementing learner-centric instructional strategies that are reflective of best practices. All students have an equal opportunity for meeting the learning outcomes.

Indicator 5.6 (CI)

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. (See Appendix F in the Standards Manual.) (E/S)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): Assessments are continually administered with fidelity over time to include standardized, formative, and consistent school-based measures addressing all areas of expected student outcomes. Authentic assessment is readily seen in many classrooms and at many levels.

Indicator 5.7 (CI)

The school analyzes student performance data including: 1) implications of schoolwide 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 and analysis for program improvement. (E/S)

Compliance (C): The school uses comparison and trend data of performance. The analysis of student performance includes: 1) implications of schoolwide 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 and analysis for program improvement.

Indicator 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. (E/S)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The school consistently uses data analysis in conjunction with appropriate research (constituents, literature, etc.) to make educationally sound decisions regarding students, instructional strategies, and programmatic improvements.

Indicator 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 schoolwide expected student outcomes, and (4) annual progress of

individual students. (C)

Compliance (C): The school has procedures for regular communication regarding the results of both formative and summative assessments used, schoolwide trends in achievement, and accomplishment of schoolwide expected student outcomes.

Indicator 5.10

Age-appropriate 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. (C)

Compliance (C): Resources are adequate and appropriate for the programs offered. Materials are systematically evaluated and selected with moral and cultural sensitivity and include Christian distinctives. There is a formal process for the faculty members to provide input into the selection of information resources supporting the attainment of the schoolwide expected student outcomes.

Standard 5 - Instructional Program and Resources (5.11-5.16)

Indicator 5.11

Information resources are readily accessible to students and staff. Training for students and staff on the use of information resources is supported by specially trained staff. (C)

Compliance (C): Information resources, including those beyond online search engines, are adequate for college prep coursework and are readily accessible by students and staff. (Adjust appropriately for schools with lower grades.) Trained staff are usually available to assist staff and students with their research and support needs. Schools with elementary grades incorporate library/ media center skills into the curriculum. Professional development for staff is provided as needed.

Indicator 5.12

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. (C)

Compliance (C): Technology is incorporated into the curriculum. Uses vary with teachers. Some have higher level use which incorporate critical thinking, collaboration, and creative uses for students. Other teachers are still using technology primarily as a presentation tool. Students use technology to complete assignments at a similar variety of levels.

Indicator 5.13

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. (E/S)

Compliance (C): 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.

Indicator 5.14

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. (C)

Compliance (C): The school has a written policy regarding student/ teacher ratio for each school division. The school has a written policy regarding the time allocated for instruction that meets the requirements of the state, province, or foreign country of the school•s geographic location.

Indicator 5.15

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. (E/S)

Compliance (C): The school instructs teachers and students in the ethical and moral use and evaluation of materials from any source, including verification, attribution and credit, appropriate referencing, and media literacy, and provides appropriate documentation of the instruction. The curriculum includes instruction in the proper documentation of sources.

Indicator 5.16

The school has, and regularly evaluates, a technology plan that includes the acquisition, inventory, and maintenance of software and hardware as well as program philosophy, acceptable use policies, student learning outcomes, and strategies for integration of technology into the curriculum. (C)

Compliance (C): The school has created a technology management plan that includes the acquisition, inventory, and maintenance of software and hardware as well as program philosophy, acceptable use policies, student learning outcomes, and strategies for integration of technology into the curriculum. The school implements the plan and regularly evaluates it.

Standard 5 Narrative - Overview

In one to two pages, explain how the standard is met or what the barriers, if any, are to compliance for the overall instructional program. If the school is not found to be in compliance, what needs to occur for it to become compliant? Identify what data most relevant to mission attainment the school regularly collects in this standard area and what systems are in place to analyze the data and ensure implementation of improvement strategies. (Use your indicator ratings, documentation, and other sources to validate your explanation.)

This overview of the instructional program can be completed for each school division separately if the school is divided into divisions. There is not a separate section for each discipline (subject area). If the team wants to comment on any particular subject, do so in this overview.

The instructional program at SCS is intentionally built upon a biblical foundation, with an emphasis on a variety of instructional practices that meet the needs of the learners. The purchase of Curriculum Trak appears to be a good decision however, it may have been a year or two later than would have been ideal for this accreditation cycle. Many teachers did not have their curriculum guides completed yet in Curriculum Trak and the old Word copies of their curriculum had not been updated. The result was an incomplete picture of the written curriculum. While the teachers working in Curriculum Trak had included connections to Expected Student Outcomes, assessments, and external standards such as ISTE and National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the older versions did not all have those areas included. Work is scheduled to be completed by the end of the school year.

A variety of resources and materials are utilized to support and enhance the school-wide expected student outcomes. Students have access to well-equipped media centers at each level, interactive whiteboards in almost every classroom, several carts with laptops and iPads, and a variety of online resources such as Reading Plus and IXL Math. Subscriptions to a wide variety of materials are made available to teachers and students and a team of trained staff assist with their use. All media materials are screened before entering the media center and

classrooms. A filter is active for the Internet through the school. Students have access to Wi-Fi and can bring their own devices as long as they follow the rules in the classrooms about how and when the devices are to be used. Teachers and students use technology resources in a variety of ways for research. There is not as much use of technology for creative and collaborative use, and presentations were still primarily PowerPoint presentations.

Many teachers used a variety of teaching techniques that promoted active student engagement. It was clear from interviews and a review of the evidence that this was common practice for many. However, there were some teachers who were known as those who just lecture or use worksheets. This was a concern at the middle school and high school in a couple of areas. Monthly faculty meetings and bi-weekly administration meetings are used to discuss school climate and student progress. Regular "walk-throughs" and observations serve to monitor professionalism and the development of higher order thinking skills within the classroom. Teachers meet at the beginning of the year to review testing data, which provides feedback for instruction, as well as information for the incoming class. Year-end evaluations allow the teacher to reflect on instructional practices and set professional goals for the upcoming year. The year-end meetings also gives teachers time to analyze test data and make decisions about curriculum, instruction, and individual students that may need additional help over the summer. They ensure scores are recorded and they look for trends for various populations at that time as well.

During the school year, most teachers are involved in a regular grade level or department meeting. These occur at least monthly, some every two weeks, but most occur weekly. In these meetings, time is spent on struggling students, practices that can make the team stronger, ideas that work, and other initiatives that may be relevant for the time, such as revising a schedule to work around standardized testing. When asked about teams that could not meet as often as others, it became clear that most of those teachers used online chat and threaded discussions to have virtual meetings when they could not meet face-to-face.

Policies and procedures are in place to support an effective learning environment. A comprehensive technology plan, including purchase, support and acceptable use, is in use. Staff, students and families must sign an acceptable use policy. Students at SCS receive technology instruction with a certified technology teacher, which includes the Google environment, PowerPoint presentations, and research opportunities.

Established written policies are in place to give direction to the staff in meeting the individual needs of each student admitted to the school. A special emphasis on school culture has initiated a program of professional development to better understand and be sufficiently sensitive to the economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds of all students and families. The special needs program has really blossomed at the elementary and middle school. It started recently at the high school and is becoming more effective with the current staff member. Programs use an RtI model. Many teachers at the elementary school are comfortable with the process and use their team meeting time to discuss students and start the referral process. Grade level and department meetings are much less frequent at the high school and there is occasionally a lag between identifying a student with needs and following up with the forms required for RtI.

Services for ELL students have improved at the high school in the past couple of years with the hiring of a trained ELL teacher. This same person has been hired full-time this year to manage the International Student Program. Because of this, students are monitored almost weekly for progress with their grades, social and emotional adjustment, and for issues on how their host family situation is working out. The ISP coordinator has been able to create cultural and social events so that students have something to look forward to other than just classes. Domestic students take part in these also and this has increased the interaction between international and domestic students. Several of the events have included host families which has had a very positive reaction. This is the second year that SCS has had a special Bible class for the international students. It presents concepts in the Bible for the novice and allows them to learn those easily, without coercion. Students feel free to ask questions such as "Why do Christians believe this or that?" Conversation has been active in the class, especially this year, as the teacher who teaches it this year seems well-suited to it. Also, the class is all year and by the second semester, the international students are now very comfortable with the teacher and the class. Recent course evaluations show that even though most of the students do not identify themselves as Christians, they are open to learning more, and almost all identified the class as one of their favorites.

Although struggling students are now getting support outside the classroom to help them keep up, there was very little differentiation seen in the regular classroom to allow for different levels, enrichment, or simply a variety of

learning styles. Technology tools such as Reading Plus and IXL Math do provide differentiation when independent work is assigned. More could be done during group instruction.

In the EE program, teacher assistants have taken on the responsibility to organize student work into personal portfolios. They maintain a physical portfolio for every student and a digital portfolio of the most important work. While there is a digital camera in each classroom, most of the teacher assistants now simply use their own cellphones and quickly capture the work and send it to the appropriate file. At conference time and at the end of the year, the teachers make sure parents have a good representation of the students' work. Also, the receiving teacher has a copy as well.

Commendations

Each commendation has two parts: A. the statement declares the positive behavior or action the school has taken and the beneficial result that is related. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Commendation #1

Teachers value collaboration and make an effort to meet together to discuss students, plan jointly, discuss strategies, and solve common problems. (Indicator 5.5, 5.6)

Teachers at all levels make the time to meet together. For those in high school who cannot do this as easily because the schedule does not allow it, they have created a way to accomplish it through technology. (interviews with teachers; review of the threaded discussion)

Commendation #2

The school regularly engages the entire staff in analyzing student performance data at all levels and making sure that this information is used to purchase materials, choose curriculum, identify struggling students, modify instruction, or consider program changes. (Indicator 5.7)

With a regular in-services set aside in May and August for data analysis and program evaluation, it has become part of the conversation and the culture at SCS to focus on test results and the impact they will have on instruction. In May, teachers work through a set of questions that include 1) growth of their class for the year 2) progress of each student for whom they are responsible 3) disaggregated data by groups 4) trends from year to year and 5) comparison to other schools and national averages. Teachers begin the school year with an in-service session reviewing the data on their incoming students. (interviews with teachers; review of the assessment documents)

Commendation #3

The school has continued to improve services for international students by providing an ELL teacher, an International Student Program Coordinator, and now a full year of Intro to Bible based on its ongoing assessment of student satisfaction and achievement. (Indicators 5.5 and 5.6)

Recognizing that international students have unique needs, SCS has continued to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the students involved in the program. This ongoing assessment has prompted them to hire additional staff and provide support in the areas mentioned. Student, parent, and host family satisfaction scores have been rising steadily with these changes. Teachers have also reported feeling more supported since they have a staff member to help them with teaching techniques as well as providing direct student support. (interviews with teachers, students; satisfaction surveys of teachers)

Recommendations

Each recommendation has two parts: A. the statement declares needed improvement the school should take and the beneficial result that would be realized. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Recommendation #1

Evaluate instructional strategies and learning activities in each classroom to promote more active student engagement on a regular basis. (indicator 5.4)

Course evaluations, student and parent interviews, and observations seemed to show that not all teachers were as focused on active student engagement as others. It is the responsibility of the administration to both train and supervise to ensure that all teachers are using best practices for teaching/learning. (course evaluations; student and parents interviews; classroom observations)

Recommendation #2

Develop means through which differentiation for students' abilities, interests, and learning styles can be taken into account to personalize learning and therefore enhance the overall academic experience of the students. (indicator 5.4 and 5.13)

Most of the lessons observed were done for one single type of learner, all in one large group. Differentiation by readiness, ability, interest, learning styles, and in the ways students are allowed to demonstrate what they have learned will allow them to connect to the material at their instructional level and in a way that interests them the most. (class observations; staff interviews)

Recommendation #3

Examine the uses of instructional technology with a goal to include more challenging ways to apply their learning such as those that require collaborative work, solving problems, creating original work, or using technology to connect and communicate.(indicator 5.3 and 5.4)

Teachers and students both use technology resources in a variety of ways for research. There is not as much use of technology for creative and collaborative use, problem solving, and presentations were still primarily PowerPoint presentations. (observations; interviews with students and faculty; samples of student work)

Recommendation #4

Complete the curriculum guide to include all the required components: ESOs, philosophy, and other elements listed in indicator 5.2. (indicator 5.2)

A number of teachers did not have their curriculum guides complete yet in Curriculum Trak and the old Word copies of their curriculum had not been updated for several years. The result was an incomplete picture of the curriculum in written form. While the teachers working in Curriculum Trak were including connections to ESOs, assessments, and external standards, the older versions did not have those areas included. (Curriculum Trak; interviews with administration and faculty)

Adherence to the Standard

The following is the visiting team's rating of the school's compliance with the standard. If the school is not compliant on any critical indicator, there must be a corresponding recommendation for each one.

PC (Partially Compliant)

Explanation of partial or noncompliance

If the school is partially or noncompliant, please write a brief statement indicating why they are not compliant. Include a recommendation addressing the issue in the Recommendations section.

Some of the teachers did not have their curriculum entered into Curriculum Trak which the school had recently purchased. The documents still in WORD were missing some of the aspects required in Indicator 5.2 because the older version of the curriculum was completed when the school did not require all the components. The work is scheduled to be completed by the end of the school year.

Standard 6 - Student Care (Indicators 6.1-6.10)

Indicator 6.1 (CI)*

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. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The school has a comprehensive and reviewed written security and crisis management plan. It has trained the staff and students in how to respond and has provided orientation to the parents to effectively communicate the school•s preparedness, including coordination with community responders. A safety audit has been conducted.

Indicator 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. (C)

Compliance (C): The school has formally written a plan for communicating with legal authorities, parents, media, and community members in times of crisis or emergency, and it has provided staff orientation.

Indicator 6.3

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

Compliance (C): All local, state, and federal laws regarding safety and health issues are met.

Indicator 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. (C)

Partial Compliance (PC): Some student records are outdated, undocumented, or incomplete.

Indicator 6.5 (CI)

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

Compliance (C): Written policies and procedures for all areas of health and safety services have been developed, reviewed, and implemented.

Indicator 6.6 (CI)

Biblically-based plans and procedures are developed that educate the school community regarding harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Students and families are educated on how to build biblically-based relationships, have caring interaction, and resolve conflicts with peers. (C)

Compliance (C): Biblically-based plans and procedures are developed that educate the school community regarding harassment, intimidation, and bullying. They are consistently followed, and incidences are addressed as they occur. Students and families are educated on how to build biblically-based relationships, have caring interaction, and resolve conflicts with peers.

Indicator 6.7 (CI)*

The school has developed policies and procedures that promote child safety; define conduct expectations for staff and volunteers; and provide training for staff, volunteers, and students. Staff training includes legal reporting responsibilities in cases of alleged or suspected child abuse, neglect, or other areas in which reporting is mandated. (C)

Compliance (C): The school has developed written policies that promote child safety. Policies are in alignment with all civil requirements regarding child abuse or neglect. Staff members and volunteers are trained in school expectations regarding conduct and in requirements related to reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.

Indicator 6.8

The school complies with local, state, and federal regulations regarding preparation, delivery, handling, and storage of food. The school provides a suitable and hygienic eating space for the staff and students. (C)

Compliance (C): The school complies with local, state, and federal regulations regarding preparation, delivery, handling, and storage of food. The school provides a suitable and hygienic eating space for the staff and students.

Indicator 6.9

Meals and snacks offered by the school are based on sound nutritional standards. (C)

Compliance (C): Developmentally appropriate nutritional standards are consulted and implemented in the selection of both snacks and meals.

Indicator 6.10 (CI)*

Required local, state, and federal legal standards for fire protection, sanitation, and transportation are met. (C)

Compliance (C): Policies and practices that reflect the required local, state, and federal standards are in place. Observation and documentation confirm that these legal standards are followed.

Standard 6 - Student Care (Indicators 6.11-6.16)

Indicator 6.11

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

Compliance (C): Documented, regular maintenance and safety inspections are conducted, and deficiencies are corrected to ensure a safe and orderly environment.

Indicator 6.12 (CI)

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. (C)

Compliance (C): Facilities are secure and of sufficient size and nature to provide quality instruction that is consistent with the goals of the school. Maintenance of facilities is consistent and of good quality, and it provides a good testimony to the community.

Indicator 6.13 (CI)

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

Partial Compliance (PC): Recreation areas, common areas, and athletic areas exist, but they are not an adequate size for the intended use and/or they contain one or more safety hazards that have not been addressed.

Indicator 6.14

Facilities planning is in place to address future programs; enrollment changes; staff, facility, and technology needs; as well as future capital improvements. (C)

Compliance (C): Facilities planning considers potential growth or reduction in the areas of enrollment, staffing and/or technology needs, and capital improvements. Capital funding is addressed in the school•s budget.

Indicator 6.15

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

Compliance (C): Written policies exist for vehicle use and driver qualifications. Vehicles meet government standards. Drivers are licensed at the appropriate levels. Adequate liability, vehicle, and property insurance policies are in place, and regulations are followed. OR, the EE program does not utilize vehicles to transport children.

Indicator 6.16

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. (C)

Compliance (C): Written policies and procedures are in place for routine safety inspections, servicing, and repair of school-owned vehicles. Policies for reporting vehicle accidents are explicit and followed. OR, the EE program does not utilize vehicles to transport children.

Standard 6 Overview

The following narrative provides an overview of "what is" in relation to this standard. The team refers to evidence or examples regarding the school's compliance to the standard in their comments.

SCS has developed and implemented a comprehensive crisis and safety plan. The crisis and safety plan is in compliance with all school safety procedures required by the state. SCS regularly conducts emergency drills to prepare the staff and students for a potential emergency situation. A written manual exists which covers the emergency plan and it is updated regularly. The school employs a part-time security director that is on campus during much of the school day. When he is not there, he is usually working at home (semi-retired) which is nearby and is on call. The security director has established good communication with local authorities. The security director is also a certified CPR and first aid instructor. He has trained the janitor and one of the principals to take his place if an emergency happens when he is not on the campus. The principal is usually onsite when there are students present and the janitor is usually on-site after hours.

The school has purchased a state-of-the-art communication system which allows for calls, e-mails, and texts to all family members on the list or just a segmented portion. From a school closure, which might activate most every contact down to a single bus list which might indicate a late arrival, the communication system has been effective and highly praised by parents.

SCS is in full compliance with all local, state, and federal laws regarding safety and health procedures. The school has appropriately implemented policies and procedures to ensure the health of all of the staff and students. School health policies and procedures are communicated to the stakeholders through the Student/Parent Handbook. All medications dispensed at the school are done so following legal documentation provided by the parent or guardian of the student. Dispensation is carried out by the nurse's aide or trained office personnel in her absence. Documentation and communication to parents is not as consistent when the nurse's aide is not present.

SCS's large cafeteria offers students daily hot lunches. They are served by a staff comprised of both paid and volunteer workers. The school is in full compliance with all local, state, and federal guidelines regarding food preparation, handling, and storage along with sanitation of the cafeteria and all food contact surfaces. The school provides ample and spacious dining locations for both the student body and faculty. They also post menus and nutritional information online.

SCS places high emphasis on providing safe, orderly, and well-maintained facilities. The school is strongly supported by the facilities personnel who regularly inspect, clean, and maintain the building and grounds. The building is comprised of classrooms, administrative space, gym, music and art room, and computer, science, and media labs. There are two outdoor playgrounds and two fields, one on either side of the buildings. One is a soccer field and the other is a baseball field. The fences around the fields are not in good repair. Though they were not constructed to keep children out of the area, they have become somewhat of a hazard in their current state and children do get minor cuts and scrapes if they climb on them. The school children have been told to stay off them but children in the neighborhood may not. The fences around the two playgrounds were put in or repaired when the playgrounds were built or revitalized and they are both in good condition.

In the EE program, volunteers have been a wonderful addition during recess, snack time, and lunch time. They are thoroughly screened and have been taught the safety standards for food preparation and behavior for children during these times. There is always a teacher or teacher assistant on duty but the addition of trained volunteers has allowed the ratio of adults to children to be much more advantageous. If something needs to be cleaned up or a child needs attention after a minor scrape, the volunteers are able to deal with the individual child and the employees on duty are still free to do the supervision of the group.

Commendations

Each commendation has two parts: A. the statement declares the positive behavior or action the school has taken and the beneficial result that is related. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Commendation #1

The school has successfully implemented a system of contacting parents and students in all types of emergency situations through their choice of communication method. (Indicator 6.2)

Individuals are able to access the system in a way that allows them to manage their preferences (cell or home phone, e-mail or text) and keep the contact information up-to-date. Several staff members have access to this system from home and school and even from their cell phones, thus allowing them to use it in almost any emergency situation and any time of the day. (interviews with staff; observation of communication program)

Commendation #2

SCS has frequently utilized local law enforcement for scenario training that is situational, reflective, and helps teachers with problem solving abilities in crisis situations. (Indicators 6.1 and 6.2)

The scenario training has included active shooter scenarios, bomb threats, rapid evacuations, and external threats in the local area. In each case, law enforcement brought off-duty personnel to help with the training at no cost to the school, because of the working relationship they have with the security director. Staff report that they feel much better prepared to handle emergency situations now and they will not be afraid to make a decision if they are faced with a crisis. (interviews with administrators and teachers; notes from inservice training)

Commendation #3

The EE program has attracted, screened, and trained a cadre of volunteers for its program. The volunteers increase the safety of children especially during snack, lunch, and times that the children are on the playground. (Indicators 6.3a and 6.14a)

Trained volunteers help in a variety of ways to ensure the safety of SCS's young children. For the food preparation, they prepare the snack and lunches, making sure that all food meets the criteria communicated to parents for the size and manner of preparation required for young children. On the playground, they provide an extra set of eyes and hands as the young children experiment with play equipment. They also take care of minor injuries, or any situation requiring extra time with an individual child, allowing the school employees to continue their supervision of the group. (interviews with EE teachers, teacher assistants, volunteers, administrators; observation of volunteers working in program)

Recommendations

Each recommendation has two parts: A. the statement declares needed improvement the school should take and the beneficial result that would be realized. B. The second part is the description which

includes the evidence.

Recommendation #1

Repair the fence around the soccer and baseball fields so that the educational environment is safe. (Indicator 6.12 and 6.14)

The fences around the two fields have fallen into disrepair and could present a danger to students or children in the neighborhood. While the students are warned to stay off of them, under the law, anyone hurt on them would be the responsibility of the school. Therefore, it is important for the safety of all involved that the fences be repaired. (observation of fields; interview with staff and parents)

Recommendation #2

Improve record keeping and communication to parents regarding medicines given to students during the hours when the nurse's aide is not present on campus. (Indicator 6.4)

There seemed to be some confusion about whose responsibility it is to enter medicines administered to students into the student database and when to communicate to parents about what medications had been administered during hours when the nurse's aide was not present. A process needs to be developed and implemented consistently so that information is recorded and shared with parents in a timely fashion. (interviews with parents, staff; review of health records)

Adherence to the Standard

The following is the visiting team's rating of the school's compliance with the standard. If the school is not compliant on any critical indicator, there must be a corresponding recommendation for each one.

C (Compliant)

Standard 7 - Character, Values, and Spiritual Formation of Students

Indicator 7.1 (CI)

Schoolwide expected student outcomes include character development, acquisition of Christian values, and spiritual formation. (C)

Compliance (C): Schoolwide expected student outcomes include character development, acquisition of Christian values, and spiritual formation. The outcomes are published in the school community.

Indicator 7.2

Christlike respect, compassion, and caring for self and all others is taught and demonstrated by school personnel. (C)

Compliance (C): A comprehensive framework for teaching respect, compassion, and caring for self and all others is taught and demonstrated by school personnel.

Indicator 7.3

Mentoring and discipleship experiences focus on spiritual formation, character development, and the instilling of Christian values. The school provides a structure whereby each student is known personally by at least one adult who can provide support for that student's spiritual formation. (E/S)

Compliance (C): Students and teachers are trained in a mentoring and discipleship program focusing on spiritual formation, character development, and instilling Christian values. The school offers the following: Effective chapels and some small-group activities; Planned curricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular programs for spiritual formation, character development, and the instilling of Christian values. The school provides a structure whereby each student is known personally by at least one adult who can provide support for that student•s spiritual formation.

Indicator 7.4 (CI)

Board, administration, faculty, staff, and student interactions reflect the attitude of Christ. Communication among them demonstrates sensitivity and responsiveness to the individual needs, interests, and temperaments of the students. (C)

Compliance (C): Board, administration, faculty, staff, and student interactions reflect the attitude of Christ. Communication among them clearly demonstrates sensitivity and responsiveness to the individual needs, interests, and temperaments of the students.

Indicator 7.5

All aspects of the school and its instructional program reflect developmentally appropriate application of

a biblical worldview and Christlike character and values. (C)

Compliance (C): Application of a biblical worldview and Christlike character and values is evident in a natural and unforced manner, is included across the curriculum and all activities of the school and builds upon previous learning. True integration is evident rather than just correlation. Training for how to develop a biblical worldview and how to integrate Christlike character and values is an ongoing component of the staff professional development program.

Indicator 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. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): Opportunities for service, missions, and personal growth are determined by the full staff. Careful thought is given to the matriculation of students, the cultural needs represented around the location of the school, and the maximization of the specialized gifts and callings of the staff who have a heart for local and/or global ministry.

Indicator 7.7

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

Compliance (C): Assessment of the spiritual development of students is intentionally included in the ongoing evaluation of the school•s effectiveness. Assessment of schoolwide outcomes is organized and intentional.

Indicator 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 schoolwide expected student outcomes. (E/S)

Compliance (C): Assessment of the spiritual development of students is intentionally included in the ongoing evaluation of the school•s effectiveness. Assessment of schoolwide outcomes is organized and intentional.

Standard 7 Overview

The following narrative provides an overview of "what is" in relation to this standard. The team refers to evidence or examples regarding the school's compliance to the standard in their comments.

From its inception, the vision of SCS has been to equip and raise up godly generations of young people who: 1) learn to love, 2) learn to learn, and 3) learn to serve. This vision is clearly stated in the School Board Policy Manual, the Student/Parent Handbook, and on the website. The school makes every effort to teach and encourage its students to develop Christlike character, live according to biblical values and principles, and fully experience spiritual growth leading to Christian maturity. While there is always room for improvement, SCS has had significant success in achieving these goals. Parents were surveyed twice since the last cycle of accreditation five years ago and they identified the strong spiritual qualities of SCS as a top consideration in choosing the school for their children's education during both of those surveys. Teachers were also surveyed at

those times and agreed that SCS has been successful in teaching its students character traits that focus on Christian values. The teachers not only model ethical and moral behavior based on biblical principles, but also practice disciplines of the Christian life such as attending a Bible-believing church, Bible studies, scripture memorization, prayer, devotions, and journaling.

Bible classes are taught as part of the regular school program. The day opens with devotions and/or prayer in most homeroom classrooms. Many of those are student-led. Students share prayer requests, pray for one another, and give testimonies of answered prayer. All students K-8 are involved in class organized missions and service activities. In high school, students choose what they want to be involved in and participation is optional. Many of these missions and service opportunities are student-led, allowing students the opportunity to apply their faith in ways that are most meaningful to them. They also provide rich opportunities for leadership development and mentoring since each group must have an adult mentor who may or may not be a faculty person. Even though participation in these activities is optional, in a recent survey, over 60% of the high school student body participates in service or missions at least 20 hours per year. Over 20% participates 100 hours or more per year (self-reported).

Parent survey feedback and parent interviews are supportive of the school's current efforts at training their students to think biblically and live in a Christlike manner. Parents interviewed appreciate the emphasis on building a Christian worldview and their level of satisfaction was consistent with the two surveys for which results were reviewed. Their greatest concern was that their students would own their faith and claim it as their own once they were off to college.

The school is just beginning to collect a number of the assessments for the non-academic expected student outcomes into a spiritual formation evaluation. They have set a goal for themselves to finalize the SCS Spiritual Formation Assessment by the fall of 2018. Ideas for that include a survey segment that they can give students two and four years out of high school as a way to measure how they are retaining some of the values they have been taught in the home and school. The part-time chaplain is a key figure in helping to organize the missions and service opportunities and in the spiritual formation assessment process.

Commendations

Each commendation has two parts: A. the statement declares the positive behavior or action the school has taken and the beneficial result that is related. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Commendation #1

SCS high school students participate in optional service and missions opportunities at a high level and take significant leadership responsibilities in creating and leading many of these groups. (Indicator 7.6)

SCS has a tremendous variety of ongoing service and missions opportunities as well as encouraging new initiatives that students have a passion for any given year. The school leadership provides just enough structure and support to help the students organize and yet learn a great deal from being a student-led group. (student and staff interviews; documentation of service/missions opportunities)

Recommendations

Each recommendation has two parts: A. the statement declares needed improvement the school should take and the beneficial result that would be realized. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Recommendation #1

Complete the task of developing a spiritual formation evaluation tool to include the non-academic expected student outcomes and other appropriate tools in order to measure program effectiveness for the purpose of program planning and improvement. (Indicator 7.8)

SCS has started gathering results of the non-academic expected student outcomes and has identified some other areas they want to include in the spiritual formation evaluation they are designing, such as an alumni survey. In order for this tool to be effective as a tool for program evaluation and improvement, they will need to decide on the parts to be given consistently, and then start administering it with fidelity, year after year. (staff interviews; review of expected student outcomes assessments; proposed alumni survey)

Adherence to the Standard

The following is the visiting team's rating of the school's compliance with the standard. If the school is not compliant on any critical indicator, there must be a corresponding recommendation for each one.

C (Compliant)

Standard 8 - School Improvement

Indicator 8.1 (CI)

The school improvement plan is developed by utilizing a variety of organizational, achievement, and survey data and input from all stakeholder groups. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): Policies and procedures that ensure data-driven planning are in place and followed. Surveys and other consistent data collection and analysis informs all aspects of the CSIP. Stakeholders demonstrate understanding of the CSIP and consider the plan to be clear and comprehensive.

Indicator 8.2

The CSIP reflects the fulfillment of the philosophy, mission, and vision of the school and the attainment of schoolwide academic and non-academic expected student outcomes and school effectiveness. (C)

Compliance (C): The CSIP reflects the fulfillment of the philosophy, mission, and vision of the school and the academic and non-academic achievement of schoolwide expected student outcomes, including academics, character, service, relationships, or other categories of outcomes.

Indicator 8.3

The planning process is organizationally comprehensive and establishes goals and priorities for development. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The planning process is organizationally thorough and comprehensive. Specific goals that are measurable and achievable have been developed.

Indicator 8.4

Each action item in the improvement plan addresses the fiscal, personnel, resources, and time implications for implementation. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The CSIP action items address the fiscal, personnel, resources, and time implications for implementation. Each item is given a priority basis for use of resources, and progress is documented and available for review by the staff and stakeholders.

Indicator 8.5

The school evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its improvement plan and regularly communicates the results to all stakeholders. (C)

Exceeds Compliance (EC): The school annually evaluates the effectiveness and impact of its CSIP. Information on the CSIP and progress on each item in it are readily available to all stakeholders. Findings are used to modify school policies and procedures.

Standard 8 Overview

The following narrative provides an overview of "what is" in relation to this standard. The team refers to evidence or examples regarding the school's compliance to the standard in their comments.

Be sure to reflect on the school's Continuous School Improvement Plan. Include the team's analysis of the school's capacity to complete the plan in terms of resources, personnel, and the timeframe indicated. Also comment on the appropriateness and thoroughness of the goals identified, both in terms of how they were selected and how they will help move the school forward toward meeting their expected student outcomes.

Since the last accreditation visit, SCS became more focused on having a Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP) separate from the Strategic Plan. The CSIP is a one year, annualized plan that focuses primarily on the goals for all the departments that report regularly to the Superintendent. Those are Academics/Athletics, HR, Finance, Operations/Security, Technology, Admissions, and Development. Each department sets annual goals and addresses resources needed, timeframe, action steps, criteria for success, and the percent accomplished at any given time. These are prioritized within each department so it is clear which ones are being addressed in what order. Each department head is responsible to work with the superintendent to develop their goals and bring the foundational material on which the goal was based. That might be test scores, financial statements, survey results, etc.

The school board and superintendent have approved the overall CSIP and are kept updated on its progress at each monthly board meeting. There is also a School Improvement Team (SIT) which meets quarterly. They are made up of a representative from each department and a teacher representative from each campus level. This group discusses relative priorities for the goals, progress made, brainstorms on any hurdles encountered, and is used as a two-way communication system. If there are questions from the campus to the SIT, the teachers bring those to the team. If there is information that needs to go back the other direction, the teachers communicate it back down to the faculty meetings.

The SIT has improved accountability for the initiatives on the CSIP and two-way communication to the faculty/staff.

The items that are completed from the previous year's CSIP are included as part of the Annual Report for parents which is posted on the web each fall. The team sensed that the plan was developed with input from appropriate constituencies and thus had buy-in from those involved as well as realistic metrics. It appears that the school has the capacity to both monitor and implement the plan as written. Budgets, personnel allotments, and scheduling have been made affected due to the implementation of the CSIP so it seems as though the administration is serious about making sure the metrics and indicators of the plan are on target.

Commendations

Each commendation has two parts: A. the statement declares the positive behavior or action the school has taken and the beneficial result that is related. B. The second part is the description which includes the evidence.

Commendation #1

SCS has developed a highly collaborative and effective system of developing and monitoring their Continuous School Improvement Plan so that it is used as an effective tool for overall school improvement. (Indicators 8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5)

Overall, the CSIP has become an effective tool for continuous school improvement. The School Improvement Team (SIT) has become a vehicle of communication between the superintendent, mid-level leadership, and teaching staff. With the identification of these annualized goals, there is much more clarity between what the staff and the school board are each responsible for (the difference between the CSIP and the Strategic Plan). (staff and school board interviews; review of the CSIP)

Adherence to the Standard

The following is the visiting team's rating of the school's compliance with the standard. If the school is not compliant on any critical indicator, there must be a corresponding recommendation for each one.

EC (Exceeds Compliance)

Major Commendations

Major Commendation # 1

The school regularly engages the entire staff in analyzing student performance data at all levels and making sure that this information is used to purchase materials, choose curriculum, identify struggling students, modify instruction, or consider program changes. (Indicator 5.7)

With regular in-services set aside in May and August for data analysis and program evaluation, it has become part of the conversation and the culture at SCS to focus on test results and the impact they will have on instruction. In May, teachers work through a set of questions that include 1) growth of their class for the year 2) progress of each student for whom they are responsible 3) disaggregated data by groups 4) trends from year to year and 5) comparison to other schools and national averages. Teachers begin the school year with an in-service session reviewing the data on their incoming students. (interviews with teachers, review of the assessment documents)

Major Commendation # 2

The school has continued to improve services for international students by providing an ELL teacher, an International Student Program Coordinator, and now a full year of Intro to Bible based on its ongoing assessment of student satisfaction and achievement. (Indicators 5.5 and 5.6)

Recognizing that international students have unique needs, SCS has continued to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the students involved in the program. This ongoing assessment has prompted them to hire additional staff and provide support in the areas mentioned. Student, parent, and host family satisfaction scores have been rising steadily with these changes. Teachers have also reported feeling more supported since they have a staff member to help them with teaching techniques as well as providing direct student support. (interviews with teachers, students; satisfaction surveys)

Major Commendation # 3

The school has successfully implemented a system of contacting parents and students in all types of emergency situations through their choice of communication method. (Indicator 6.2)

Individuals are able to access the system in a way that allows them to manage their preferences (cell or home phone, e-mail or text) and keep the contact information up-to-date. Several staff members have access to this system from home and school and even from their cell phones, thus allowing them to use it in almost any emergency situation and any time of the day. (interviews with staff, observation of program)

Major Commendation # 4

SCS has frequently utilized local law enforcement for scenario training that is situational, reflective, and helps teachers with problem solving abilities in crisis situations. (Indicators 6.1 and 6.2)

The scenario training has included active shooter scenarios, bomb threats, rapid evacuations, and external threats in the local area. In each case, law enforcement brought off-duty personnel to help with the training at no cost to the school, because of the working relationship they have with the security director. Staff report that they feel much better prepared to handle emergency situations now and they will not be afraid to make a decision if they are faced with a crisis. (interviews with administrators and teachers, notes from inservice training)

Major Commendation # 5

SCS high school students participate in optional service and missions opportunities at a high level and take significant leadership responsibilities in creating and leading many of these groups. (Indicator 7.6)

SCS has a tremendous variety of ongoing service and missions opportunities as well as encouraging new initiatives that students have a passion for any given year. The school leadership provides just enough structure and support to help the students organize and yet learn a great deal from being a student-led group. (student and staff interviews; documentation of service/missions opportunities)

Major Commendation # 6

SCS has developed a highly collaborative and effective system of developing and monitoring their Continuous School Improvement Plan so that it is used as an effective tool for overall school improvement. (Indicators 8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5)

Overall, the CSIP has become an effective tool for continuous school improvement. The School Improvement Team (SIT) has become a vehicle of communication between the superintendent, mid-level leadership, and teaching staff. With the identification of these annualized goals, there is much more clarity between what the staff and the school board are each responsible for (the difference between the CSIP and the Strategic Plan). (staff and school board interviews; review of the CSIP)

Major Recommendations

Major Recommendation # 1

Monitor the work week for the hourly staff to ensure they are not violating school policy and employment law. (Indicator 4.8)

Some hourly employees were aware that working "off the clock" was not allowed at the school and that it was a violation of employment law. However, they stated that they did it because they wanted to get the job done and did not want to go over their allotted hours. Supervisors have developed a plan to monitor overtime hours and issue prior approval when an employee needs to work additional hours to complete a project. (interviews with hourly employees; review of the faculty/staff handbook)

Major Recommendation # 2

Complete the curriculum guide to include all the required components: ESOs, philosophy, and other elements listed in indicator 5.2. (Indicator 5.2)

A number of teachers did not have their curriculum guides complete in Curriculum Trak and the old Word copies of their curriculum had not been updated for several years. The result was a veryincomplete picture of the curriculum in written form. While the teachers working in Curriculum Trak were including connections to ESOs, assessments, and external standards, the older versions did not have those areas included. (Curriculum Trak; interviews with administration and faculty)

Major Recommendation # 3

Require that 80 percent of teachers and teacher assistants complete ACSI's Principles and Practices of Christian Early Education course. (Indicator 4.7c)

SCS had recently purchased ACSI's Principles and Practices DVD but had not made time for all the teachers to watch it. They were only at 70% compliance on completing that course. The EE Director has developed a plan utilizing the EE program's permanent sub and if followed, they should be in compliance by September 1 of this year. (interviews with staff, EE Director; Self-study EE section Standard 5, pg. 122)

Final Narratives

Summary of the Self-Study Process

The following is a description of the school's self-study report, documentation, evidences, organization, use of surveys, and assessments.

Since this was the school's third time through the accreditation process and the second time through with the same self-study coordinator and superintendent, the process went very smoothly.

Work on the school's self-study began in earnest about eighteen months prior to the visit. The leadership team selected a self-study coordinator to oversee the process. He was the chair of the steering committee that was made up of the chairs of each individual committee (8 members in all). Eight committees were formed to address each of the standards of the REACH protocol. Two additional committees were developed—one covered hospitality and logistics and the other survey administration/interpretation and student performance. Timelines and action plans were initiated to work toward the deadlines of a spring visit to the school by a visiting team. The steering committee met each month and from a review of the agendas, it appears that either all eight members were present, or just those whose areas were on the agenda that month.

The school conscientiously assembled all of the components required to write a self-study for the school. The chair of the steering committee followed the processes laid out in the REACH Manual and in the School Administrator Handbook.

The school was visited about seven months prior to the team visit by the consultant who would later be the chair for the team visit. A final date was set for the visit at that time. A Pre-Visit Standards/Indicators Checklist was used to determine readiness for the spring visit. There were only a few outstanding issues noted but the school had the means and the time to address them so the team visit was scheduled.

The school completed and submitted its self-study, working with the consultant/chair throughout the process. The school provided evidence, attaching data, documents, artifacts that would support the meeting of the accreditation standards along with the self-study. They also indicated which items would be available on-site such as the personnel files, the complete audit, and some student work samples. The self-study and the electronic documentation was provided six weeks prior to the visit.

SCS surveyed their constituents two times in the past three years. They used surveys designed by the school and the surveys made available by AdvancED. Results were provided in a way that was easy for the team to understand. The students, faculty, and staff were surveyed both times and the alumni were surveyed only once. All the subcommittees were given the results of the surveys in advance and were able to incorporate their findings in the various sections. The school met the required response rates for all of their surveys. They analyzed the high and low scores and scores which changed over time. In several cases, they looked into why scores had changed and developed strategies to address the scores that they felt were lower than desirable. The school also looked at the scores and compared them to other measures such as classroom evaluations and responses from parent groups to ascertain if these scores were indicative of the true feelings of their constituents. In several specific cases, such as teachers' feedback on increased collaboration and shared planning time, they saw a direct correlation between actions taken and a rise in scores.

A daily schedule for the visit was established by the consultant and finalized by the school's self-study coordinator. A workroom was provided and the team was more than adequately cared for in terms of food, drinks, technology access, maps, schedules, and supplies. The self-study coordinator had arranged the schedule so the team had access to parents, students, and staff in a very efficient manner. The school was very helpful to the team in providing all of the data and information required for a successful visit.

Finally, the school had also prepared its staff well by explaining the process of accreditation from start to finish. Teachers and non-instructional staff seemed to understand what to expect. When asked how they were involved, every person could clearly articulate what committee they had been a part of or what they had done to help make the visit a success. They understood that the work they had done was paying off in many ways as they had already identified and made improvements before the team ever arrived. Parents were positive and supportive when interviewed and seemed to understand the value of having an accreditation completed by an organization that could truly evaluate the school from a Christian perspective. There were even some students who took an interest in the process and seemed to appreciate that the thorough evaluation was part of trying to make the school better. All in all, the school did a great job of helping everyone understand the purpose of accreditation and that being transparent was helpful to the process.

Conclusion Summary

The following section is a summary of the school's general compliance with the standards. It should also address major themes and the school's consistency of its mission and practice.

This accreditation visit came at a good time in the life of the school. With the introduction of the two online charter schools and the loss of some students, there had been some personal discouragement at the faculty and administrative level. Through the accreditation process, staff and administration affirmed that reviewing their purpose and recommitting to their mission had been more than a healthy exercise. It has breathed life back into them affirming they were accomplishing their mission.

The following are some of the highlights or conclusions the visiting team gathered after reviewing the standards:

The health of the SCS board and the tremendous heart of the superintendent are bearing fruit in the school. It was clear that the expanded ministry to single parent families, increased special needs, and international students that were not coming from Christian homes were all part of the vision to bring a Christian education to all who could benefit from it. (Standard 2)

SCS' teachers are the heart and soul of the school. The school values their teachers and it shows in ways such as a strong evaluation and professional development model. Several new hires have been made in response to student needs such as special needs teachers at all levels and an ELL/International Student Coordinator. (Standard 4)

Spiritual formation is important to the staff and administration at SCS. They weave it into all their classes and other activities. They evaluate their teachers with an eye to how well they develop spiritual ideas along with academic content and how well they integrate the two. SCS has started an important task of developing its own tool to measure spiritual formation during a student's stay at SCS as well as during the next four years. (Standard 7)

The school's CSIP contains all the qualities outlined for a good plan. Furthermore, they have developed a School Improvement Team in order to hold themselves accountable and to aid them in communication about the completion of those goals. (Standard 8)

SCS was generally in compliance with most of the standards. Standards Four and Five were in partial compliance due to a couple of areas. Since these items were clearly identified by the school, they only represented one portion of the indicator in each case, and were well on their way to completion, they were not deemed enough of a concern to prevent the team from moving ahead with a recommendation for accreditation. All other standards were at the compliance level except for standard eight which was at the "Exceeds Compliance" level.

The SCS program has an exceptionally clear mission, a strong academic base, and a positive Christ-honoring culture in which students are both educated and nurtured. By integrating major recommendations from the

visiting team's report into the CSIP, the school will be ideally positioned to move forward into its next phase of growth.

One theme that came through over and over was that this was a team effort. There was a tremendous sense of unity among the administration and staff and that extended to the parents and school board as well. It was not uncommon to hear stories of individuals helping others through many situations. School board members volunteer to sell tickets at the basketball games and teachers at one division make sure they attend the drama of the others. Even though the school is 30 years old, there is still a feeling that they are all in this together and they are still all personally invested in making sure it is a success.

Another theme that came through was that they care about quality and are willing to spend money when it is needed. Resources are limited and the school is careful in how they spend their money but there is a general feeling that if something is really important, it is possible to obtain it. The decision making on purchases is thorough, deliberate, and they seem to be asking the right questions.

Some of the same themes were evident in the Early Education program. The program was well-resourced and the environment was monitored for cleanliness regularly. Teachers were dedicated to the children from the very first day in their classes. Communication and conferences with parents demonstrated a very positive attitude toward the child's growth and development and fostered a team approach between parents and teachers. The teacher assistants are very helpful as they collect and digitize much of the students' work and keep it in a personal portfolio system. The EE program supported its teachers by hiring an extra staff member to be available for a variety of situations. Many times this allowed teachers to collaborate in planning or prepare for special units coming up. One of the goals the EE staff needed to work on was their professional development. They have a plan to complete the ACSI Principles and Practices of Christian Early Education but they were not able to complete that for all staff prior to the visit.

Finally, SCS is balancing the mission focus on love with a focus on academic excellence in a truly remarkable way. There are plenty of high expectations for students and students have responded with high achievement. That takes discipline and the ability to teach self-discipline. However, it seems that they have also been able to convince them that love is really the greater value. It is a wonderful combination and seems to be serving them well.

Confidence is high in the school community that SCS is moving in a good direction. They seem open to wanting to learn from the visiting team and using the input they gain to move closer to the vision of the school they believe God would have them become.

Statement of Appreciation to the School

The visiting team was welcomed on campus and hosted in a most gracious manner. The accommodations, transportation, meals, and snacks were outstanding! The team felt well-cared for and enjoyed their stay at SCS.

SCS is to be commended for their thorough preparation of the self-study as well as planning for the actual visit. The team had everything it needed from the opening evening to its departure. Teachers were very flexible about allowing team members into their classrooms and they did not seem to mind as members filtered in and out. Everyone who was interviewed was open and honest and shared insights in areas that needed improvement as well as strengths of the school and their particular departments. Parents and students were friendly, gave honest feedback, and yet it was clear that the vast majority were very loyal to the school because they were having a great educational experience as part of the SCS family.

It was a distinct personal and professional pleasure for each member of the visiting team to have been a part of this visit. Each of the members learned from the professionalism and the various examples of excellence observed at the school. The administration demonstrated a tremendous combination of grace and high expectations for both staff and students. The teachers were passionate about their subjects and yet clearly showed kindness to each student with whom they came into contact. Non-instructional staff were servants from the beginning to the end, in every situation. They have hearts of gold. The school board is also a remarkable

group and seems well-qualified to lead this group of varied people through encouraging words and by example.

Finally, the visiting team would like to express appreciation to the parents and students of SCS. The parents have made a commitment to Christian education that is significant. Many sacrifice financially to afford SCS but many, regardless of financial position, take time to volunteer and help wherever they can. Their participation was impressive. The students are the fruit of the labor for all the people above and they are worth it. They work hard and are willing to think deeply and Christianly about this world. These students welcomed us into their daily activities as well as their hearts and were open about their school and what God is doing in their lives. The future looks bright with these young people at the helm!

Special thanks goes to Mrs. Smith who was our visit coordinator. She helped us with all the arrangements and was our go-to person for almost anything. Thanks also goes to Mr. Graham the Self-Study Coordinator, for doing such a wonderful job of completing the self-study and organizing the documents. The school was blessed to have him in that position for the second time and he was definitely an asset to the team!

Next Steps

The school will receive the visiting team's draft within 30 days of the visit. A copy will go to the appropriate regional office for consideration by the regional commission at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Those meetings happen twice a year. The commission may make changes in the report, if deemed necessary. They will determine the accreditation status and terms for the accreditation period.

If the school is working through a dual accreditation process, the self-study and visiting team report are forwarded to the partner association along with any additional documentation required. That association will communicate directly to the school regarding its accreditation decision.

In the period after the final copy of the report is received, the school is expected to review and communicate the findings, address the recommendations and include them in the school improvement process, continue to report progress on annual reports to ACSI, and maintain accreditation standards.

Accreditation makes a statement about the past, present, and future of a school. In the past, the school has worked hard to meet the standards at a level that shows compliance or above. In the present, accreditation signifies a stamp of approval by ACSI as the accrediting body through the work of a group of peers who know what makes a quality Christian education institution. Finally, accreditation also signifies a commitment to ongoing continuous school improvement as it develops appropriate plans and monitors them for the benefit of student growth and achievement in all areas.

Roster of Team Members

Chair(s)

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