

Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Accreditation Standards (2010)

There are nine Standards that apply to all schools. These Standards are 'numbered' from one (1) to nine (9). The nine Standards are followed by four other Standards that apply only to those schools that have certain programs. The four programs are: Early Childhood, Extended Day, Religious, School Improvement. Those Standards are optional in that only schools that have those programs would include them as part of their Accrediting process. Those Standards are identified by letters A to D.

STANDARD 1: Foundational Statements

Principle/Standard: The identity and unique purpose of a religious and independent school is rooted in its foundational statements that specify its vision, mission, and core values. The foundation statements are cooperatively identified, clearly stated, and mutually accepted, and direct the learner throughout his/her educational and formational experience.

STANDARD 2: Communication and Community Relationships

Principle/Standard: Members of the school community have developed, implemented, and communicated an effective school-community interaction plan to: (1) strengthen the school and community; (2) facilitate support for the school; and (3) provide opportunities for parent education and participation in the activities of the school that encourages cooperation and collaboration among home, school, religious, and civic communities.

STANDARD 3: The Environment for Teaching and Learning

The Climate of the School and Classroom

Principle/Standard: School climate may be defined as the combination of those qualities of the school environment that affect the attitudes, behavior, and achievement of the people involved in its operation – students, parent/family members, administrators, faculty, staff, governance/consultative body, and members of the faith and civic communities. In quality schools, the adults and students care for, respect, and trust one another. School personnel believe that all children are able to learn. Students and staff expect to be successful as lifelong learners. Morale is high, and social and academic growth are continuous. The environment for teaching and learning is the lived experience of the foundational statements of the school.

STANDARD 4: Leadership and Governance

The Responsibility for the Educational and Organizational Effectiveness of the School

Principle/Standard: An effective school community operates under the guidance of a governing/consultative body and the leadership and management of an administrator. The members of this body and the administrator fulfill their roles and responsibilities in a manner that supports the foundational statements of the school community.

STANDARD 5: Resources

Human (5.01), Financial (5.20), Physical (5.30)

Principle/Standard: An effective school has a qualified staff supported by the financial and physical resources necessary to advance the foundational statements of the school. A professional and competent staff is provided in sufficient numbers to support student learning. Professional development and support services are aligned with quality planning needed to accomplish the school improvement plans of the school.

STANDARD 6: Learning and Teaching

Curriculum, Assessment, Strategies

Principle/Standard: An effective learning environment is the hallmark of a religious and independent school in so far as it provides a guaranteed and viable curriculum, an assessment program that reports the proficiency and achievement of the learner, and research-based instructional strategies that foster active meaningful engagement in learning. The professional instructional staff, under the guidance of the administrator, develops this learning environment which is based on standards for content, disposition, and process so as to encourage the learner's development of critical and creative thinking skills, problem solving ability, and performance skills.

Standard 7: Materials and Resources for Learning

Instructional Media and Technology

Principle/Standard: An effective learning environment in a religious and independent school is enhanced with materials and resources for the learner that includes instructional media and technology.

Standard 8: Student Services to Support the Learner

Principle/Standard: The intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual growth and development of the learner are supported by all members of the school community. Student services are provided for all learners with the understanding that each learner is given opportunities to develop his/her abilities and talents.

STANDARD 9: Long Range Planning

Strategies and Tools for Improving the School

Principle/Standard: The members of the school community plan to ensure the continuous effectiveness of the school and its programs for students.

STANDARD A: Early Childhood Education

Principle/Standard: An early childhood program reflects a developmentally appropriate learning environment. This environment is both age and individual appropriate.

STANDARD B: Extended Day

Principle/Standard: The role of the school as an advocate of quality extended school day programs is paramount. The stakeholders in the school are able to provide leadership in establishing communication, cooperation, collaboration, and participation among families, school-day and extended day program staff to establish and improve learning opportunities for children and maximize their opportunities for success.

Appendix C: Religious Identity

Principle/Standard: At the foundation of a religious school is its religious identity to a specific religion or denomination. The religious school operates in conformance with the dogmas, teachings/doctrines, and laws of the religion or denomination. It is committed to teaching the fullness of faith, values, and practices and to integrating these core values into all facets of the learner's life. This integration of faith and values according to the religion or denomination

distinguishes the religious school from other religious, independent and public schools. The formation and education are evidenced in relationships with one another, prayer experiences, well-planned religious instruction, service to community, and value-oriented religious living.

Standard D: School Improvement

Principle/Standard: The School Improvement Plan will be a multi-year, data informed, systematic process that identifies what will be improved and how the plan will be implemented to demonstrate measurable gains or progress in attaining the identified goals.