

Consortium for Classical Lutheran Education

ACCREDITATION INFORMATION AND TIMELINE

I. Mission

The mission of the Consortium for Classical Lutheran Education is to promote, establish, and equip individuals and schools committed to confessional Lutheran doctrine and a classical approach to education.

II. Vision

The CCLE will advance and promote classical education within the context of confessional Lutheranism among teachers, administrators, pastors, and home educators by providing standards, conferences, in-service education, resource materials, and consulting services.

In line with this vision for education, we commend to our member schools the following works which will help restore a classical and Lutheran framework for our schools:

- *Luther's Exhortation to the Councilmen that they establish and maintain Christian schools*
- *Luther's Sermon on Keeping Children in School*
- *Dorothy Sayers' The Lost Tools of Learning*
- *John Milton Gregory's The Seven Laws of Teaching*
- *The Marks of a Classical Lutheran School*
- *The Marks of a Classical Lutheran Educator*
- *Veith & Kern's Classical Education*
- *Littlejohn & Evans' Wisdom and Eloquence*
- *Cheryl Swope's Simply Classical: A Beautiful Education for Any Child*
- *A Handbook for Classical Lutheran Education: The Best of the Consortium for Classical and Lutheran Education's Journals*

III. Accreditation Process

Step 1: Origination

1. Schools must have been in operation with a classical Lutheran education program for at least one full school year before making application for CCLE accreditation.
2. Lutheran schools write a letter of intent to CCLE stating their desire to pursue CCLE accreditation. Lutheran schools must include the signatures of the sponsoring congregation's pastor (if applicable), the headmaster/administrator, the chairman of the school board, and congregation/council president (if applicable). The letter must also mention the number of students currently attending the school.

3. With the letter of initiation, include a check or money order to the order of CCLE. This origination fee is non-refundable and applicable to the final total of accreditation fee. Please note the table of fees:

Number of Students	Origination Fee	Site Visit Fee	Total Accreditation Fee
fewer than 100	\$200	\$400	\$600
100 or more	\$300	\$400	\$700

4. The Accreditation process should be completed under the same administrator. If a school changes administrators, a reassessment of the progress of the school's application must take place with the new administration and the CCLE Accreditation committee.

5. Schools desiring to apply for National Lutheran School Accreditation through the Accreditation Agreement must indicate so in the letter of intent. Schools are responsible to complete the (shortened) NLSA application and submit the NLSA application fee upon completion of the CCLE Self-Study. The CCLE Readers and Visitors team will complete the CCLE training and be submitted to NLSA for approval. CCLE will submit the site visit report and board recommendations to the NLSA Accreditation Commissioners. Schools in Texas will also need to submit the final CCLE site visit report to LSAC with all LSAC fees.

Step 2: Application and CCLE Support:

1. Upon receipt of the letter of intent with pertinent signatures and the origination fee, the school will be sent an electronic application.

2. The application packet consists of two sections. Section I is basic school information and should be completed by typing the information in the template provided. The history of the school should include a discussion of the role of classical education in the school. Section I also requires the signatures of the headmaster/administrator, pastor, school board chairman, and congregation/council president (page 1 must be scanned).

Section I (subsections II – V) require short answers, brief essays, lists of information, or copies of documents. The information for these sections should be completed in the electronic templates. Subsections II – V should follow the organizational flow of the application. Items should be clearly marked so that there is no confusion to which question, list or section the school is referring. Section II consists of four Benchmarks. Each Benchmark consists of extended Benchmarks which must be addressed specifically. The entire application should be submitted electronically. Include a check or money order in the amount of \$400 payable to the order of CCLE before or at the time of the site visit.

3. Schools should plan to spend from four months to an academic year properly completing this application. A representative from the school will attend the Annual CCLE Conference session on Accreditation. Schools in the accreditation process which need longer to

complete the application must inform the CCLE Director of Accreditation to remain in consideration.

A CCLE resource person may assist the school in the application process. The primary role of the resource person will be to prepare the school for the accreditation visit. A CCLE resource person will meet with school representatives at the annual CCLE Conference to assist the school in the application process. Schools working toward CCLE accreditation may find it necessary to make changes in their current program before the site visit. A resource person may aid and assist the school in making these changes. This may include educational seminars designed for faculty or school development that may be provided by the resource person or someone whom the resource person may assist the school in acquiring.

Step 3: CCLE Readers

1. When the application is complete, the electronic application should be submitted to the CCLE Accreditation Committee and will be evaluated by a team of CCLE Accreditation readers. Each reader will make recommendations to the CCLE Board for a site visit based upon the application. During the reading process, CCLE readers may request additional documentation or information to support the application.

Step 4: CCLE Site Visitors

1. Based upon the collaborative review of the CCLE Accreditation readers and the approval of the CCLE Board, a site visit will be scheduled. The site visitors' responsibility is to recommend to the CCLE Board that accreditation be granted fully, granted on probation, or denied. The CCLE site visit team will make one team recommendation to the CCLE Board which is responsible for the accreditation decision.
2. The CCLE visitors will spend no more than three full days observing the school. The CCLE visitors may assist the school with any questions about classical Lutheran education but their primary role will be to affirm that the school is genuinely meeting the goals and objectives of CCLE Accreditation.
3. At the end of the visit, the CCLE visitors will recommend that the school be fully accredited, denied accreditation, or accredited on probation to the CCLE Board. If the school is accredited on probation, specific recommendations will be given. These recommendations are to be completed within one to three years of the visit. Progress on recommendations is reported through the annual school report. The CCLE Director of Accreditation will annually review the school's progress toward meeting the recommendations made by the visitors. Based on this review, the CCLE Director of Accreditation will recommend to the CCLE Board that the school be fully accredited or continue on probation. If the school continues on probation, the CCLE Accreditation Committee will determine the guidelines for probation.

The CCLE Board retains the right to deny accreditation at any time during any step of the accreditation process.

4. The school seeking accreditation is responsible for financing the lodging, meals, and travel expenses of the CCLE visitors. Schools should plan ahead and make proper budgetary plans to prepare for the CCLE site visit.

Step 5: CCLE Accreditation Decisions

1. Accreditation is granted upon evidence that the school meets all of *The Marks of a Classical Lutheran School*. All schools approved for initial CCLE accreditation are on probation for the first year.

- i. Accreditation may be granted with recommendations, suggestions, or commendations.
- ii. Recommendations will be given a deadline for completion. Typically, recommendations should be completed within one year. Recommendations not completed within three years of the date of application may result in the school forfeiting CCLE Accreditation by Board action.
- iii. Suggestions may be completed at the discretion of the school administration.
- iv. Commendations are given by the site visit team for benchmarks where the school performance exceeds the letter and spirit of the benchmark.

2. The school's compliance with the Benchmarks is scored with the following scale:

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|---|-----------------------------|
| 3 | Exceeds the Benchmark |
| 2 | Meets the Benchmark |
| 1 | Does Not Meet the Benchmark |

Benchmark scores of 2 [meets the Benchmark] or 3 [exceeds the Benchmark] are required for the following Benchmarks:

**I, I.A., I.B.2., I.B.3,
II.A.1, II.A.2, II.A.3, II.A.4, II.B.2, and II.B. 3.**

The aggregate school score for all Benchmarks must be 66% or higher.

3. Every year after the initial accreditation is awarded, the school will make an annual report and remit annual membership dues to CCLE. The forms for the annual report will be sent to the school each year and are due by August 1.

4. After a school has successfully been approved for accreditation and is no longer on probation, the school must continue to make annual reports. CCLE will supply an electronic form for each school. There will also be an annual membership dues assessment. The assessment is \$2.00 per student (this includes part-day students) with a total minimum of \$50 per year.

5. CCLE retains the right to place any school on probation or deny accreditation to a school that is unable to uphold the high standards of CCLE Accreditation. After four years, another CCLE self-study and site visit will be scheduled to assist the school and to confirm that the school continues to uphold CCLE Accreditation standards.

6. CCLE may recognize a school for **exemplary practices**. These aspects will exceed the particular Benchmark and serve as models for other schools. The visitors will recommend exemplary practice commendations to the CCLE Board who will include this recognition at the summer conference. Exemplary status may be recognized in:

EXEMPLARY THEOLOGICAL CURRICULUM AND WORSHIP (e.g. music program included)

EXEMPLARY CLASSICAL CURRICULUM (e.g. curriculum guides; academic extra-curricular programs)

EXEMPLARY ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES (e.g. policy manuals, parent/school cooperation, faculty development)

EXEMPLARY ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT (e.g. test scores)

EXEMPLARY CLASSICAL ENVIRONMENT (e.g. well-kept facilities, aesthetics, classical and Christian themes evident, superb resources such as library, technology, etc.)

Step 6: NLSA Co-Accreditation

Schools which desire National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) will need to submit the NLSA application form, access to the completed self-study documents, the CCLE Visitors final report, and a check for current dues to Dr. Rebecca Schmidt, Director of Schools LCMS, 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO., 63122 as soon as the CCLE Board announces the accreditation decision.

IV. Timeline

Year/Date	School Action	CCLE Action
Year 1	Letter of intent and origination/renewal fee submitted; school representatives attend Accreditation session at CCLE Annual Conference	CCLE sends electronic application to school administration; provides Accreditation session at CCLE Annual Conference
	School completes Application & Self Study (working with resource person if necessary); submits copies to CCLE readers; submits application fee	CCLE readers complete review of application and Self Study; site visit is scheduled by CCLE Accreditation Director in cooperation with school administration
	School prepares for Site Visit	Site Visitors complete Site Visit; submit recommendations to CCLE Board; CCLE Board announces Accreditation Decision at CCLE Annual Conference
Years 2, 3, 4, & 5	School submits annual reports & annual membership dues by August 1	CCLE Director and Board monitor annual reports; Director submits school accreditation records and annual accreditation summary report to CCLE Board
Year 6 = Year 1	Letter of intent and origination/renewal fee submitted; school representatives attend Accreditation session at CCLE Summer Conference; School completes re-application (working with resource person if necessary); submits copies to CCLE readers	CCLE sends electronic re-application templates to school administration after receipt of letter of intent and origination fee; after Re-Application Self-Study is submitted by School, CCLE readers complete review of re-application; site visit is scheduled by CCLE Director in cooperation with school administration