



***Marks of a Classical Lutheran
Early Childhood Program***

Benchmarks for Excellence

***Consortium for Classical
Lutheran Education***

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Benchmarks for Excellence

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INTRODUCTION

The Board of CCLE has developed the Benchmarks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program to function as a tool in the accreditation process and to promote institutional development.

This Benchmarks for Excellence document contains relevant behavioral examples or indexes of varying levels of performance on each of the Benchmarks and were developed to reflect the various performance levels for each of the Benchmark score indicators.

Members of the Site Visitation Team must evaluate the evidence or behavioral example of the School's compliance with each Benchmark on the following scale:

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: Results and attained goals **CONSISTENTLY EXCEED** what is normally expected of a Early Childhood Program. Substantially contributes to the advancement of classical and Lutheran education by reaching beyond what is normally expected in terms of spiritual development, professional faculty, and student achievements.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: Results and attained goals **CONSISTENTLY MEET** what is normally expected at a Early Childhood Program of this size. Consistently meets all Benchmarks.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Falls **CONSISTENTLY BELOW** the Benchmark; evidence is inadequate, incomplete, or incorrect; results do not positively describe or reflect Early Childhood Program or effectiveness.

The *Benchmarks for Excellence* serves several purposes. They are important to:

- establish and maintain consistent Early Childhood Program performances;
- provide members of the Visitation team a common behavioral “frame of reference” for the evaluation of the Early Childhood Program’s compliance level with each Benchmark; and
- gauge the educational performance of a particular Early Childhood Program with the benefit of indicating quality outcomes in critical areas that demonstrate need of program improvement.

The Benchmarks exist to lead the Early Childhood Program in the process of self-assessment toward the goal of evaluating the accomplishment of its mission.

Section 1 Application

- I. School Information
- II. Historical Background of Early Childhood Program
- III. Personnel Demographics
 - i. Administrator/Program Director
 - ii. Faculty
 - iii. Support Staff
 - iv. Pastor
- IV. Student Demographics
- V. School Operations

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: All information is present with significant and multiple pieces of evidence. Materials to support the Section exceed what is normally expected and informs the Reader of the staff and student spiritual development, staff professional background and development, and student academic achievement and progress.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: All information is present with adequate, minimally one piece of evidence. Materials to support the Section provide what is normally expected and informs the Reader of the staff and student spiritual development, staff professional background and development, and student academic achievement and progress.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Information and or evidence is inadequate, incomplete, or incorrect; results do not inform the Reader about staff and student spiritual development, staff professional background or development, and student academic achievement or progress.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- brief history of Early Childhood Program
- application forms (personnel demographics, student demographics)
- documents that communicate admissions and recruitment procedures (brochures, application forms, publicity materials, etc.)
- documents that provide tuition and fees information
- documentation of Early Childhood Program retention policy
- external communications
- documentation of recruitment, interviewing, hiring, evaluating, and terminating teachers

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

I. The Early Childhood Program confesses and incorporates a commitment to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in all aspects of its educational mission as it is taught and confessed in the inspired sacred Scriptures and the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The commitment permeates all aspects of the Early Childhood Program educational mission, both inwardly to the Early Childhood Program and Church and outwardly to the community in which it functions. The commitment is visible in all statements and practices. It is clearly aligned with Scripture and the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The commitment permeates all aspects of the Early Childhood Program's educational mission and is distinctly visible in all statements and practices. It is aligned with Scripture and the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The commitment permeates some but not all aspects of the Early Childhood Program's educational mission; it is not distinctly visible in all statements and practices. It is incompletely aligned with the Scriptures and/or the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- mission and/or vision statements which explicitly reference a commitment to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ
- mission and/or vision statements which explicitly reference the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Book of Concord)

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IA. This faith commitment is explicitly articulated in the Early Childhood Program's charter as expressed in the constitution and bylaws of the sponsoring congregation or governing body.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The written statement of commitment is well written and comprehensive and approved by the governing Early Childhood Program board. All faculty, administrators, board members, students, and parents indicate annual agreement with the written statement. The statement is printed in the Early Childhood Program's charter or governing document and in the sponsoring church's constitution and bylaws. It is also included in all Early Childhood Program publications and documents.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The written statement of commitment is satisfactory, comprehensive, and approved by the governing Early Childhood Program board. All faculty, administrators, students, and parents indicate agreement with the written statement when admitted to the Early Childhood Program. The statement is printed in the Early Childhood Program charter or governing document and in the sponsoring church's constitution and bylaws. It is also included in appropriate Early Childhood Program publications and documents.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The written statement of commitment is poorly written and does not reflect approval by the governing Early Childhood Program board, neither does it require agreement by faculty, administrators, students, or parents.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- copy of constitution and bylaws of sponsoring congregation or governing body
- copy of constitution and bylaws or other governing document of incorporation of Early Childhood Program entity/association

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program
IB. This faith commitment shapes—and is reflected in—the Early Childhood Program’s faculty, staff, instructional program, educational philosophy, and worship life.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The statement of educational philosophy is well written and reflects a true understanding of the purpose and understanding of Classical Lutheran education. The instructional program and worship life align with the stated purpose and understanding in ways that demonstrate the faith commitment to and educate all community members.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The written statement of educational philosophy reflects an understanding of the purpose of Classical and Lutheran education. The instructional program and worship life align with the stated purpose and understanding in ways that demonstrate the faith commitment to Program and Church families.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: There is no written statement of educational philosophy; the statement is poorly written or does not reflect comprehension of the purpose and understanding of Classical Lutheran education. The instructional program and/or the worship life is not aligned with the faith commitment; no faith commitment is demonstrated.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- faculty information pages
- support staff information pages
- pastor/early childhood program director information pages
- curricular plan (demonstrated in curriculum maps, scope and sequence)
- Early Childhood Program Statement of Educational Philosophy; Early Childhood Program Mission/Vision Statement
- Pastor’s description of worship schedule, theological instruction
- Schedule of program/church worship participation/opportunities/engagements

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IB1. Faculty and staff confess and reflect this commitment in their personal faith, worship life, and professional service to the Early Childhood Program.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: Faculty and staff are active members of an Evangelical Lutheran Church, attending regularly, participating in Church and Early Childhood Program co- and extra-curricular activities and functions, and serving in Church and Early Childhood Program committee and projects as needed.

- 2 Meets the Benchmark: Faculty and staff are members of an Evangelical Lutheran Church and attend regularly. Faculty and staff assist in Early Childhood Program worship life and in other service opportunities to the Early Childhood Program as required by contract or asked.

- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Faculty and staff are not members of an Evangelical Lutheran Church and/or do not attend church regularly. Faculty and staff do not assist in or support Early Childhood Program worship life or other service opportunities for the Early Childhood Program.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Faculty information page
- Support staff information page
- Early Childhood Program Director's description of worship life, theological instruction, etc.
- Pastor's description of worship life, theological instruction, etc.

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IB2. A Lutheran, Christian world-view shapes, integrates, and unites the instructional programs of the Early Childhood Program—its academic focus, educational resources, and priorities.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: A Lutheran world-view is clearly documented in the scope and sequence of the academic, the spiritual, and the social development curricula of the Early Childhood Program. Lutheran doctrine and theology are incorporated into the daily schedule and in appropriate courses of study. Educational resources that support an Evangelical Lutheran world-view are carefully selected for use. Content and activities are prioritized according to their contributions to building a Lutheran world-view.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: A Lutheran world-view is evident in the design of the academic, the spiritual, and the social development curriculum of the Early Childhood Program. Lutheran doctrine and theology are incorporated into appropriate study. Educational resources that support a Lutheran world-view are selected for use. Content and activities are prioritized according to their contributions to building a Lutheran world-view.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Neither a Lutheran, nor particularly Christian world-view is evident in the academic, spiritual, or social development curricula of the Early Childhood Program. Educational resources are not reviewed for world-view perspectives. Content and activities are planned without consideration of building a Lutheran world-view.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Curriculum maps, scope and sequence, faculty descriptions of instructional programs, etc.
- Mission and/or Vision Statements, Early Childhood Program. Statement of Philosophy of Education
- Lists of texts and ancillary materials used in instructional programs
- Budgeting process explanation to reflect established priorities (including resources, professional development, etc.)

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IB3. Catechesis—teaching of the faith with confession and prayer—is central in the instructional life of the school on all grade levels in accord with the Early Childhood Program’s confessional commitment.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The centrality of Catechesis is evident throughout the School schedule and curriculum and is reflected in the ethos and aesthetics of the Early Childhood Program and classrooms. Each level includes age-appropriate components of Catechesis. Students participate in the confessional worship life of the Program on a regular basis.

- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The centrality of Catechesis is evident through the Program schedule and curriculum. Each level includes age-appropriate components of Catechesis on a weekly basis.

- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Catechesis is not evident in the Program schedule and/or the curriculum and/or is only minimally implemented. Age-appropriate components are not present.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Copy of Early Childhood Program schedule demonstrating inclusion of catechesis
- Copy of curricular program demonstrating inclusion of catechesis
 - Description of theological instruction by teacher
 - Description of theological instruction by program director
 - Description of theological instruction by Pastor

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IB4. Worship life uses and teaches the historic forms of liturgy and hymnody as they express and convey the gifts of the pure Gospel in Word and Sacrament.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The Program schedule includes daily worship life utilizing the historic forms of Lutheran liturgy and hymnody. Students memorize Scriptures and the confessional writings and liturgies as part of doctrinal study. Hymns and songs are carefully vetted for meaning and theological value.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The Program schedule includes weekly worship life utilizing the historic forms of Lutheran liturgy and hymnody. Students memorize Scriptures and the confessional liturgies as part of doctrinal study. Hymns and songs are carefully vetted for meaning and theological value.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The Program schedule does not include weekly worship life and/or does not use only historic forms of Lutheran liturgy and hymnody and/or does not carefully monitor the selection of hymns or songs.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Written explanation by Pastor or Director
 - How often does worship occur?
 - What is the order of worship?
 - What other worship opportunities occur?
 - What is the worship connection between the Early Childhood Program and sponsoring church?
 - What is the worship interactions between the Early Childhood Program and sponsoring church?
 - Which Bible lectionary schedule is used (1 or 3 year)?
 - Is the lectionary the same or is it level-specific? If so, identify.

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

II. The Early Childhood Program demonstrates a commitment to a classical approach to curriculum and instruction within the framework of its confessional, Lutheran character.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The Early Childhood Program demonstrates its commitment to a classical approach to curriculum and instruction within the framework of its confessional, Lutheran character by means of all publications, presentations, and activities. The commitment is articulated in all written recruiting and curricular documents and supported by identification in curricular organization (scope and sequence, curriculum maps, etc.)
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The Early Childhood Program demonstrates its commitment to a classical approach to curriculum and instruction within the framework of its confessional, Lutheran character by means of recruiting publications, teaching organization, and activities.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The Early Childhood Program does not demonstrate a commitment to a classical approach to curriculum and instruction within the framework of its confessional, Lutheran character in any documentation, programmatic orientation, or activities. The commitment is not articulated in any statements or presentations.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Early Childhood Program Statement of Philosophy of Education, curriculum maps, scope and sequence, etc.
- Communications which explain the classical approach (*trivium*)
- Teacher explanations of instruction
- Student work exemplars (on site)

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIA. The Early Childhood Program’s curriculum and instruction is shaped pedagogy that nurtures the basic language skills—grammar, logic, rhetoric—to progressively equip learners to carry out successfully their own inquiries into what is true, good, and beautiful.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: Elements of the *trivium* are present in all aspects of praxis—instruction, curriculum, assessment, and the Early Childhood Program schedule at all levels and in all content areas with the objective of developing curious, creative, and self-motivated learners. Recruiting materials and other publications present the elements of the *trivium* in an educational manner.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: Elements of the *trivium* are present in all aspects of praxis—instruction, curriculum, assessment, and the Early Childhood Program schedule at all levels and in all content areas with the objective of developing curious and self-motivated learners.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Elements of the *trivium* are missing in some aspects of praxis—instruction, curriculum, assessment, and/or the Early Childhood Program schedule in some or all levels, in some or all content areas. No objective for imagination or self-motivated learning is evident.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Program Director description of curriculum
- Teacher descriptions of curriculum by subject/content area/discipline
- Public communications that explain classical education
- Student work exemplars (on site)

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIA1. These skills are taught and exemplified by instructional strategies that are informed and shaped by levels of student intellectual maturity and aptitude—specifically grammar at the early childhood level preparing students for logic and rhetoric.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: Instructional strategies intentionally target student skill development utilizing stages of the *trivium* as the framework with the objective of age-appropriate exploration and appreciation of what is true, good, and beautiful. Teachers are able to implement multiple strategies within levels in response to differences in student intellectual maturity and aptitude.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: Instructional strategies intentionally target student skill development utilizing stages of the *trivium* as the framework with the objective of age-appropriate exploration and appreciation of what is true, good, and beautiful. Teachers attempt or occasionally implement multiple strategies within levels in response to student need.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Instructional strategies do not intentionally target skill development utilizing stages of the *trivium* on a consistent basis within levels and/or do not establish the objective of age-appropriate exploration and appreciation of what is true, good, and beautiful.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Program Director’s overview of school-wide classical orientation
- Teachers’ paragraphs (per subject) explaining classical orientation
- List of instructional materials used in each subject area by level

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIA2. All faculty and staff are committed to the classical approach in education and exhibit an enthusiastic willingness to grow in their understanding, skills, and appreciation of this approach to pedagogy.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: All faculty and staff are able to articulate the conceptual basis of classical education to parents, students, and community members and seize opportunities to do so. All faculty and staff demonstrate and share a professional desire for lifelong learning in this area and seek opportunities for professional development.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: All faculty and staff are able to articulate the conceptual basis of classical education to parents, students, and community members. All faculty and staff demonstrate and share a professional desire for lifelong learning in this area.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Not all faculty and staff can articulate the conceptual basis of classical education. Not all faculty and staff participate in professional development opportunities.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Teacher information page
 - Professional memberships
 - Professional reading list for last 12 months
 - Professional development activities
- Lesson plans with classical education annotations
- Student assignments with classical education annotations (on site)

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIA3. Each member of the faculty demonstrates being an enthusiastic ongoing learner in his assigned teaching areas of responsibility in and out of the classroom.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: Each member of the faculty demonstrates superior knowledge and experience in assigned teaching areas as well as responsibilities outside of classroom instruction. The teacher is able to motivate students into joyful learning.

- 2 Meets the Benchmark: Each member of the faculty demonstrates competent knowledge and experience in assigned teaching areas as well as responsibilities outside of classroom instruction.

- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Each member of the faculty does not demonstrate competent knowledge and experience in assigned teaching areas or in responsibilities outside of classroom instruction.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Teacher descriptions of classroom curricula
- Teacher information page
 - Professional memberships
 - Professional reading in last 12 months

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIA4. The Early Childhood Program’s governance possesses and implements ways and means for the continuing education of its staff in the classical approach—appropriate to the levels of the Early Childhood Program’s educational program.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The Early Childhood Program’s governance plans and budgets for the continuing education of its staff in classical education pedagogy, providing for external training opportunities such as professional memberships, readings, and conference registration.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The Early Childhood Program’s governance plans and budgets for the continuing education of its staff in classical education pedagogy, providing in-house training opportunities.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The Early Childhood Program’s governance does not plan or budget for internal or external continuing education opportunities but rather leaves the financial burden for continuing education to the staff member.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Documentation of professional development priority in budget process
- Documentation of professional development priority per staff
- Professional memberships in classical education groups for staff
- Attendance at classical education-focused opportunities
- Copy of budget pages regarding professional development

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIB. The scope and sequence of the Early Childhood Program’s curricular and co-curricular programs are normed by the goal to raise up a virtuous, educated person for heavenly and earthly citizenship—the life of faith in Christ and loving service to neighbor in the offices of one’s vocation.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: Through the teaching of Luther’s doctrine of vocation, students are prepared to live in both the heavenly and earthly kingdoms. Students will learn to be faithful Christian servants and role models for their neighbors through opportunities of community service and evangelism.

- 2 Meets the Benchmark: Through the teaching of Luther’s doctrine of vocation, students are prepared to live in both the heavenly and earthly kingdoms. Students will learn to be faithful Christian servants and role models for their neighbors.

- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Students are not taught Luther’s doctrine of vocation and/or the doctrine of two kingdoms is not applied in any way.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Program Director’s description of curriculum (Scope and Sequence)
- Program Mission and/or Vision Statements, Philosophy of Education Statement

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIB1. The courses of study to be mastered by students are shaped by the significant fund of information to be passed on to the next generation for responsible citizenship in the Church and world.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: Content of the curriculum consists of studying the wisdom of the ages to develop leadership and citizenship skills through carefully selected classical education textbooks and materials. This wisdom of the ages is evident throughout the ethos of the Early Childhood Program and informs its curricular practices.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: Content of the curriculum consists of studying the wisdom of the ages to develop leadership and citizenship skills. Contemporary textbooks are supplemented by classical education materials.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Content of the curriculum does not reflect an emphasis on the wisdom of the ages, nor are textbooks and materials carefully selected to emphasize such wisdom, nor is there a focus on developing student leadership and citizenship skills.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Instructional plan (scope and sequence, curriculum maps, etc.)
- Co-curricular programs (field trips, etc.)
- Weekly schedule of each classroom
- List the instructional materials used in each subject area (listed in *Marks of a Classical Lutheran School*) by level:

Sample books and resources list:

Grade Level	Subject Area	Instructional Materials
Early Childhood	Reading/Literature	
Early Childhood	Writing	
Early Childhood	Math	
Early Childhood	Theology	

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIB2. At the early childhood level, preparatory studies for English language skills (letters, phonemes, pencil grip, letter formation, early reading, and exposure to great literature) are evident in addition to the other primary courses of study (spelling, mathematics, history, science, geography, music, art, physical education, and theology). In early childhood education, exposure to the great works they will study later is emphasized.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The primary courses of study in lower levels include the named basic skill areas. Latin is incorporated into the oldest level and is offered at least twice weekly to all students.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The primary courses of study in lower levels include the named basic skill areas. Students in the oldest level are exposed to Latin.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The primary courses of study in lower levels lack any of the basic skill areas. Only some or few students are exposed to Latin.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Instructional plan (scope and sequence, curriculum maps, etc.)
- Weekly schedule of each classroom
- Teachers descriptions of subjects per level
- Student work exemplars (on site)
- Student demonstrations and recitations (on site)

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIB3. Exposure to Latin, even in the early levels, serves as a foundation for increased mastery of English and other foreign languages. Latin in the Early Childhood Program will be primarily limited to vocabulary and can assist students in making connections to learning English vocabulary and to their catechesis program.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: Latin exposure prepares students for mastery of English and other foreign languages. Latin vocabulary is offered during the Program schedule as a content area or in connection with other areas of content, and extra-curricular activities such as Latin Day contribute to the ethos of the Program.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: Latin exposure prepares students for mastery of English and other foreign languages. Latin vocabulary is offered during the Program schedule as a content area or in connection with other areas of content.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: Latin exposure is not available or Latin exposure is not required of all students or Latin exposure does not take place within the Program schedule or in connection with other areas of content. Latin does not prepare students for mastery of English and other foreign languages.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Scope and sequence of Latin within the Program schedule or in connection with other areas of content
- Student work exemplars (on site)
- Student demonstrations and recitations (on site)

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

III. The Early Childhood Program’s institutional governance establishes and expresses clearly articulated rules, regulations, and responsibilities that are in harmony with God’s revealed orders of creation—for students, parents, staff, faculty, and board members. CCLE accreditation of your Early Childhood Center should not be confused with state licensure.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The Program functions through its published institutional governance structure. Its Board meets on a regular schedule and maintains appropriate records of its actions. Board members take their responsibilities seriously to ensure that meetings have a quorum to complete business. The Board reviews its responsibilities on a regular basis and provides orientation for new Board members.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The Program functions through its published institutional governance structure. Its Board meets on a regular schedule and maintains appropriate records of its actions. Board members take their responsibilities seriously to ensure that meetings have a quorum to complete business.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The Program does not function through its published institutional governance structure, or the Board is unable to function due to lack of quorum at business meetings.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- All handbooks for students and/or parents
- Staff handbooks
- Copies of board documents (manuals, minutes, etc.)
- Arrangements between the school and parents
 - Admission applications
 - Tuition schedules
 - Extra-curricular activities permission forms
 - Field trip permission forms

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIIA. The Early Childhood Program has written board, faculty, parent, and student policy manuals and has secured appropriate commitments.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The Program provides published manuals for students, parents, faculty and staff, and Board members. The manuals clearly articulate expected behaviors, responsibilities and consequences. The manuals contain the mission statement of the Program and an explanation of classical Lutheran education. The manuals are reviewed annually by the Board to allow for appropriate faculty, staff, and parent input into revision. The manuals require signed financial, spiritual, and academic commitments from the faculty and staff, students and parents, and Board members. Professional responsibilities for faculty are clearly articulated in written documents.

- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The Program provides published manuals for students, parents, and faculty. The handbooks or manuals articulate expected behaviors, responsibilities and consequences. The manuals are reviewed and revised by the program director or the Board. The manuals require signed financial, spiritual, and academic commitments from the faculty, students, and parents. Professional responsibilities for faculty are discussed in written documents.

- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The Program does not provide published manuals for students and parents or the manuals are outdated and have not been revised. The handbooks or manuals may not clearly articulate expected behaviors, responsibilities, and consequences. No signed commitments are required.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- All handbooks with program policies
- Copies of student/parent contracts
- Agreements with supporting groups (XXXX, etc.)

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIIB. Board members, faculty, staff, parents, and students give ample evidence to their knowledge and compliance of the Early Childhood Program's policies for conduct and responsibilities.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The Program supplies evidence that staff, parents, and students clearly understand the Program's policies for conduct and responsibilities as identified in the appropriate Program manual. The Program follows and documents its own policies regarding conduct and fiscal responsibilities. Board members review the implementation of the policies on a regular basis. Conduct and disciplinary consequences have a redemptive and teaching perspective (not punitive).
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The Program supplies evidence that staff, parents, and students clearly understand the Program's policies for conduct and responsibilities as identified in the appropriate Program manual. The Program follows and documents its own policies regarding conduct and fiscal responsibilities.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The Program does not supply evidence or staff, parents, and students are not knowledgeable or compliant with Program policies for conduct and responsibilities.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- All handbooks for students/parents with behavior expectations, disciplinary process, etc.
- All typical communications between program and parents regarding conduct and financial responsibilities
- Exemplars of disciplinary process

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IIC. The Board and Director of the Early Childhood Program provide evidence of compliance with all state regulations for annual licensing for Early Childhood Programs, including all personnel, health, scheduling, and space-usage licensing and fees.

The Early Childhood Center has secured licensure by the state and complies with all related requirements of state law. A copy of their state license has been provided with their application. (Note: If state licensure is not necessary under state law, please attach information on appropriate state statute that allows for this.)

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The Program supplies evidence of compliance with all state regulations for annual licensing. All personnel are appropriately licensed. Certificates of compliance are posted in public view and are renewed promptly.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The Program supplies evidence of compliance with all state regulations for annual licensing. Most personnel are appropriately licensed. Certificates of compliance are available upon request and are renewed as needed.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The Program does not supply evidence or documentation that annual licensing requirements have been met.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Certificates of operation with health department, fire department
- Schedule of inspections by health department, fire department
- Budget line items for renewal expenses

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IV. A comprehensive assessment plan is in place to regularly evaluate all aspects of the Early Childhood Program through means of self-examination, review, and compliance with government regulations.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The Program has a comprehensive assessment plan that evaluates both program operations and student development with established outcomes and benchmarks. All appropriate licenses are renewed on time. Results are shared with the parents, faculty and staff, the Board, and the community at large (as appropriate) in a timely manner.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The Program has a regular assessment plan that includes measures for both program operations and student development. The student assessment schedule resembles the local community's assessment schedule. All appropriate licenses are renewed on time. Results are shared with the parents, faculty and staff, and the Board in a timely manner.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The Program does internal assessments only, or does not assess both operations and student development. The Program may not maintain a regular assessment schedule or may be non-compliant with some regulations; licenses may have lapsed. Results may not be shared with parents, faculty and staff, or the Board in a timely manner.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Comprehensive schedule of external reviews and required licenses
- Copies of internally developed assessments (facilities, space usage, etc.)
- Review process for budget priorities
- Evaluation process for facilities and other physical resources
- Assessment schedule of program curricula
- Assessment schedule of individual student development

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IV.A. A strategy is in place to regularly evaluate all student developmental aspects of the Early Childhood Program in light of its classical and confessional Lutheran commitments with established ways and means to implement continuous improvement.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The Program has a comprehensive assessment plan that includes internal and external measures of cognitive, affective, physical, and spiritual student development. The School assessment schedule follows best practices recommendations. Results are shared with the parents, faculty and staff, the Board, and the community at large (as appropriate) in a timely manner.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The Program has a regular assessment plan that includes measures for each developmental area: cognitive, affective, physical, and spiritual. The School assessment schedule resembles the local community's assessment schedule. Results are shared with the student and parents, faculty and staff, and the Board in a timely manner.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The Program does internal assessments only, or does not assess all four developmental areas: cognitive, affective, physical, and spiritual. The School may not maintain a regular assessment schedule. Results may not be shared with students and parents, faculty and staff, or the Board in a timely manner.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- Comprehensive assessment schedule of internal and external measures (cognitive, spiritual, affective, physical)
- Copies of internally developed assessments (kindergarten readiness assessments, etc.)
- Copies of individual or class level student performance scores on annual standardized achievement tests
- Student work exemplars (on site)
- Recitations and demonstrations (on site)
- Evaluation process for teachers
- Review process for budget priorities
- Evaluation process for academic resources

Section 2 Marks of a Classical Lutheran Early Childhood Program

IV.B. A strategy is in place to regularly evaluate all structural/organizational and financial aspects of the Early Childhood Program with established ways and means to implement continuous improvement.

- 3 Exceeds the Benchmark: The Program has a comprehensive assessment plan that includes internal and external measures of institutional operations. The Program assessment schedule follows best practices recommendations with established outcomes and benchmarks. All appropriate licenses, reviews, and audits are renewed or conducted on time. Results are shared with the parents, faculty and staff, the Board, and the community at large (as appropriate) in a transparent manner.
- 2 Meets the Benchmark: The Program has a regular assessment plan that includes measures for each area of operations. All appropriate licenses, reviews, and audits are renewed or conducted on time. Results are shared with the parents, faculty and staff, and the Board in a timely manner.
- 1 Does not meet the Benchmark: The Program does casual assessments only, or does not evaluate all areas of operations. Some licenses, reviews, or audits may be lacking. Results may not be shared with parents, faculty and staff, or the Board in a timely manner.

Suggested evidence (but not limited to):

- schedule of internal and external licenses, reviews, and audits
- posted licenses or certificates of compliance
- letter of financial audit
- Review process for budget priorities
- Evaluation process for facilities and maintenance
- Budget line items for equipment replacement