

# *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 consultation.

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*
- *Curriculum Resource Guide for Classical Lutheran Education (CCLE Press)*

### **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 school administrator writes a letter of intent to CCLE stating their desire to pursue CCLE accreditation. The letter 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. The letter of intent may be scanned and submitted to [accreditation@ccle.org](mailto:accreditation@ccle.org).

3. With the letter of initiation, include a check or money order to the order of CCLE. This check should be mailed to Attn: CCLE, 1701 E. Park Blvd., Plano, TX 75074. This origination fee is non-refundable and applicable to the final total of accreditation fee. Please note the table of initiation fees:

Number of Students	Origination Fee	Site Visit Fee	Total Accreditation Fee
49 or fewer	\$200	\$300	\$500
50 to 99	\$300	\$450	\$750
100 or more	\$400	\$600	\$1,000

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. Once accreditation has been initiated (letter and origination fee received), the school has **three years** to complete and submit the application and host a site visit. After **three years without further progress**, the school will be removed from “in process” status and will forfeit its initiation fee. If the school desires to reapply for initial accreditation, it will need to submit a new letter and origination fee.

6. 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, School Profile, 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 (subsections I – 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 the appropriate site visit fee 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/Site Visitation Team Members**

1. When the application is complete, the electronic application should be submitted to the CCLE Accreditation Committee in a timely manner (minimum of one month) before the scheduled site visit and will be evaluated by a team of CCLE Accreditation readers. During the reading process, CCLE readers may request additional documentation or information to support the application.

### **Step 4: CCLE Site Visitors**

1. With the consultation of the CCLE Director of Accreditation, 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. A pastor will always be assigned to review Mark I, Commitment to Lutheran Doctrine and Practice.

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. The team's decision must be unanimous. 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 present the final site visit report and the team's recommendation 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. Team members will be reimbursed for their expenses by CCLE who will invoice the school for the total reimbursement amount. 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. Commendations are statements which recognize an exceptional school practice or program. Recommendations are statements through which the team identifies a gap or a requirement that is not addressed. Suggestions are statements from the team that suggest options for the school to consider.
- ii. Recommendations must be addressed. The school may be given a deadline for completion. Typically, many recommendations should be completed within one year. Recommendations not completed before renewal 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:

- 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.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 in spring each year and are due by July 1.

There will also be an annual membership dues assessment during years one through four (see item four for renewal fees). The assessment is \$3.00 per student (this includes part-day students) with a total minimum of \$75 per year. Schools which are late in reporting and paying the annual membership dues will be penalized; schools which do not submit the report or annual membership dues risk their accreditation status.

4. Accredited schools must begin the renewal process during year five of accreditation. During this year the school must submit a self-study, pay initial/renewal accreditation fees, and host a site visit. However, during this renewal year the school will NOT need to submit annual membership dues (\$3 per student) and the annual school report.

Renewal fees:

Number of Students	Origination Fee	Site Visit Fee	Total Accreditation Fee
49 or fewer	\$200	\$300	\$500
50 to 99	\$300	\$450	\$750
100 or more	\$400	\$600	\$1,000

5. CCLE accredited schools with secondary levels (high school grades 9-12) should collect and report graduate data on the annual report, including but not limited to: number of graduates, pathways after graduation (military, trade or commercial, higher education, other), college entrance exam scores (ACT, SAT, AP tests, CLT), contact information, etc. The requested information will be identified on the Annual Report Form due July 1 every year.

6. 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 five 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.

7. CCLE may recognize a school as an **exemplary school**. Exemplary schools must have scores of “3 exceed the benchmark” in each of the four benchmarks. The visitors team will recommend exemplary practice commendations to the CCLE Board who will include this recognition at the summer conference. This will be a rare recommendation.

**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. Alan Freeman, Director of Schools LCMS, 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO., 63122 as soon as the CCLE Board announces the accreditation decision.

## IV. Timeline

<b>Year/Date</b>	<b>School Action</b>	<b>CACLE Action</b>
Pre-Accreditation Year Year 0	Letter of intent and origination/renewal fee submitted; school representatives attend Accreditation session at CACLE Annual Conference	CACLE sends electronic application to school administration; provides Accreditation session at CACLE Annual Conference
	School completes Application & Self Study (working with resource person if necessary); submits copies to CACLE readers; submits application fee	CACLE readers complete review of application and Self Study; site visit is scheduled by CACLE Accreditation Director in cooperation with school administration
	School prepares for Site Visit	Site Visitors complete Site Visit; submit recommendations to CACLE Board; CACLE Board announces Accreditation Decision at CACLE Annual Conference
Years 1 (after summer conference), 2, 3, & 4	School submits annual reports & annual membership dues by July 1	CACLE Director and Board monitor annual reports; Director submits school accreditation records and annual accreditation summary report to CACLE Board
Year 5 = Year 0	Letter of intent and origination/renewal fee submitted; school representatives attend Accreditation session at CACLE Summer Conference; School completes re-application (working with resource person if necessary); submits copies to CACLE readers	CACLE 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, CACLE site visit is scheduled by CACLE Director of Accreditation in cooperation with school administration