

WELSSA FAQ

Q. What is WELSSA?

A. *WELSSA is the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod's School Accreditation agency. WELSSA is accredited by the National Council for Private School Accreditation (www.ncpsa.org) that has adopted ten standards of excellence.*

Q. What is accreditation?

A. *Accreditation is the process by which an organization recognizes a program of study or an institution as meeting predetermined standards. In other words, it is the act of granting credit or recognition to a program. The accrediting agency (WELSSA) has developed standards that it feels must be met and, in order to gain accreditation, our school must meet a minimum number of these standards.*

Q. What does Trinity have to do to become accredited?

A. *There are three major steps in the accreditation process:*

*1. **Apply for accreditation through WELSSA and meet with an accreditation counselor** to guide us through the process. Our application has been accepted by WELSSA and Dr. John Kolander (Provost of Wisconsin Lutheran College) has been assigned as our counselor.*

*2. **Perform a self-study.** We must take a look at every aspect of our school's operation according to the Ten Self-Study Standards adopted by WELSSA. Once we feel we have met at least 85% these requirements, we proceed to the next step.*

*3. **Visiting team validation** – Following completion of the self-study, a visiting team from WELSSA will come to the school to review our findings and observe our classrooms. The visiting team will then make a recommendation for or against accreditation.*

Q. How long will it take to become accredited?

A. *Trinity has 2 years from the time of our application to complete the self-study; however, the Steering Committee recommends that we set a goal to have the WELSSA team visit in April 2010.*

Q. What are the benefits of becoming accredited?

A. Accreditation carries many benefits, for example:

- When comparing private schools for their children, parents understand that accreditation reflects recognized excellence and accountability. Thus, accreditation can serve as an important recruitment tool.*
- Continual Improvement – In order to keep our accreditation, we must go through the self-study every 7 years. This means that we will need to improve constantly to make sure that we are still running a quality program.*
- Availability of third-source funding – Many employers will match contributions to accredited schools. This will also open the door for many different grants and programs offered for technology, software, teacher licensing, books, and many other things that are not currently available to us.*

Q. What can I do to help?

A. Agree to serve on one of the self-study subcommittees. Membership suggestions range from high school students to CEOs. Your expertise is needed!

Q. Where can I go for more information?

A. You can get more information by:

- 1. Speaking with any of the WELSSA Steering Committee members:
Jarrod Erbe (Chairman)
Jamie Schneider
Jason Giese
Jim Mikula
Dan Large
Everett Schulz
Mike Henning*
- 2. Visiting Trinity's accreditation website at:

<http://sites.google.com/site/trinitycaledonia/Home>*