



APPLICATION FOR NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL ACCREDITING AGENCY

Initial Application
 Renewal Application

Instructions:

- 1. All applications must be typed.
- 2. Applying agencies may refer to a specific regulation of the Tennessee State Board of Education if the agency plans to adopt that regulation as it is written.
- 3. The applicant agency may use additional sheets to answer any section of this application.

Section I (Demographics)

- A. Name of Agency Association of Classical & Christian Schools, Inc.
- B. Physical Address 205 E. Fifth Street / P.O. Box 9741
- C. City Moscow State Idaho (ID) Zip 83843
- D. Phone Number (208) 882-6101
- E. Website www.accsedu.org
- F. Chief Operating Officer Patch Blakey, Executive Director
- G. National, regional, or professional affiliations:

Member of: Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (2005); Virginia Council for Private Education (2010); Oklahoma Private School Accreditation Commission (2011); and recognized as an accrediting agency in South Dakota by approval of the state legislature, and in Idaho (for athletic purposes) by the Commissioner of Education

Section II (Member Schools)

- A. Number of member schools at the time of this application: 14 in Tennessee
- B. Please provide names, addresses, and telephone numbers of member schools which have at least ten (10) full-time students. Make additional copies of this page as needed.

1. Name Agathos Classical School

Address 1201 Mapleash Ave., Columbia, TN 38401

Phone (931) 388-0556

Number of full-time students 86

2. Name Augustine School

Address 1171 Old Humboldt Rd., Jackson, TN 38305

Phone (731) 660-6822

Number of full-time students 133

3. Name Christ's Legacy Academy

Address 964 County Rd. 180, Athens, TN 37303

Phone (423) 649-0040

Number of full-time students 70

4. Name Cornerstone Academy

Address 260 Jacobs Rd., Morristown, TN 37813

Phone (423) 307-1189

Number of full-time students 171

Section II (Member Schools) -- Continued

5. Name Crossville Christian School
Address 28 Rock Quarry Rd., Crossville, TN 38555
Phone (931) 484-0026
Number of full-time students 38
6. Name First Baptist Academy
Address 7706 Ewing Rd., Powell, TN 37849
Phone (865) 947-8503
Number of full-time students 165
7. Name Franklin Classical School
Address PO Box 1601, Franklin, TN 37065
Phone (615) 595-5337
Number of full-time students 125
8. Name Highland Rim Academy
Address PO Box 3022, Cookeville, TN 38501
Phone (931) 526-4472
Number of full-time students 88
9. Name Jonathan Edwards Classical Academy
Address 1022 S. Graycroft Ave., Madison, TN 37115
Phone (615) 876-7291
Number of full-time students 44

Section II (Member Schools) -- Continued

10. Name Paideia Academy
Address 10825 Yarnell Rd., Knoxville, TN 37932
Phone (865) 670-0440
Number of full-time students 131
11. Name Providence Academy
Address 2788 Carroll Creek Rd., Johnson City, TN 37615
Phone (423) 854-9819
Number of full-time students 474
12. Name Providence Christian Academy
Address 410 DeJarnett Rd., Murfreesboro, TN 37130
Phone (615) 904-0902
Number of full-time students 351
13. Name The Classical Academy of Franklin
Address 810 Del Rio Pike, Franklin, TN 37064
Phone (615) 790-8556
Number of full-time students 113
14. Name Westminster Academy
Address 2500 Ridgeway Rd., Memphis, TN 38119
Phone (901) 380-9192
Number of full-time students 345

Section III (Objectives and Philosophy)

List the administrative objectives and state the educational philosophy for your agency.

The administrative objectives of the Association of Classical & Christian Schools (ACCS) are:

- to promote, establish, and equip schools committed to a classical approach to education in the light of a Christian worldview grounded in the Old and New Testament Scriptures.
- to promote the classical approach, and provide accountability for member schools.
- to set an educational standard for a unified and directed approach to classical and Christian learning.
- to equip schools in teaching such subjects through the methodology known as the *Trivium* (grammar, logic, and rhetoric).
- to pursue recognition of ACCS accreditation in each state and to encourage each member school to pursue accreditation as a means of helping to verify the school's effectiveness in teaching students

(Please see the attached ACCS Brochure and ACCS Mission Statement)

The educational philosophy of ACCS first acknowledges that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge (Proverbs 1:7). After that ACCS employs the time-proven (about 1500 year-old) process of instruction known as the *Trivium* (as noted above), and as propounded in the essay by Dorothy Sayers, *The Lost Tools of Learning* (see the ACCS website www.accsedu.org > School Resources > Lost Tools of Learning).

“Grammar: Young children (grades K-6) are uniquely adapted to memorize. They learn chants, songs, and rhythmic verse well and can be taught enormous amounts of information, much of which is retained for a lifetime. By exercising this ability, students remain practiced in the art of memorizing. Modern educators often overlook memorization once the student learns to read and write well in about the third grade. As with many skills, if you don't develop memory at this phase, you lose it. Students so enjoy memorizing that they make up playground songs or chants on their own!”*

“Logic: Early adolescent children (grades 7-8) become argumentative. Their ability to draw conclusions from a series of facts begins to develop. This is called the dialectic or logic phase. Most modern educators overlook this phase, except with regard to higher math. Classical schools teach formal logic, logical fallacies, and reasoning skills through tools like the Socratic method and Aristotelian logic. These subjects are foreign to most of us unless we learned them in college. They practice students in the science of accurate thinking. In this phase, the subject matter is not as important as what conclusions the students may draw from knowledge.”*

“Rhetoric: In high school, students begin to develop a sense of how others perceive e them. They become self-conscious about fashion, vocabulary, mannerisms and various other forms of expression. Classists call this the rhetoric phase. Students in this phase learn to speak and write well. They learn to relate to their audience with clarity and persuasion. Without the ability to communicate, the best ideas go unheard and are impotent.”* A simple diagram of this educational process is presented on the page after next.

* Taken from *Discover Classical Christian Education: The Essential Guide for Parents*, The Ambrose Group, p. 10, © 2005-2007

Section III (Objectives and Philosophy) -- Continued

(Please see the attached Accreditation Handbook, p3):

I. Goals and Means of a School Accreditation Program

A. The goal of the ACCS school accreditation program is to provide objective and recognized standards of quality for those schools desiring to serve Christ through an explicitly classical and Protestant Christian approach to undergraduate education.

B. To this end, ACCS will establish policies and procedures that safeguard the integrity of the accreditation process.

C. To this end, ACCS will establish criteria for accreditation that ensure that its accredited schools achieve the following:

1. have a well-conceived program committed to a classical approach to education in light of a Christian worldview grounded in the Old and New Testament Scriptures;
2. have sufficient, qualified administrative, teacher, and support staff to achieve its goals;
3. have sufficient instructional and other facility resources to achieve its goals.

Section IV (Agency Employment Standards)

List educational and experience qualifications for the professional personnel employed by the agency.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Qualifications</u>
1. Executive Director	Faithful Christian, member of a local church, faithful spouse and parent (if married), committed to classical Christian education, minimum of a master's degree, at least 10 years of experience in leadership and administration, prior service at a classical Christian school, excellent communicator, demonstrated management skills, able to work with a board of directors
2. Director of Communications	Faithful Christian, member of a local church, faithful spouse and parent (if married), committed to classical Christian education, minimum of a master's degree, at least 10 years of experience in leadership and administration, prior service at a classical Christian school, excellent communicator, experience with website management, knowledgeable with software and computers, knowledge of publishing
3. Secretary	Faithful Christian, member of a local church, faithful spouse and parent (if married), committed to classical Christian education, minimum of an associate's degree in Liberal Arts (preferred), experience at a classical Christian school (preferred), ability to type, file, track projects, willing and able to learn new responsibilities
4. Treasurer	Faithful Christian, member of a local church, faithful spouse and parent (if married), committed to classical Christian education, minimum of a bachelor's degree, experience at a classical Christian school (preferred), knowledgeable of generally accepted accounting practices, understands budgets, chart of accounts, profit & loss reports, balance sheets, taxes codes for non-profit organizations, annual financial reviews with a CPA

Section V (Agency Professional Employees)

List names of full-time agency professional employees, position title, and brief job description. Attach additional information as necessary.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Title</u>	<u>Job Description</u>
1. <u>Patch Blakey</u>	<u>Executive Director</u>	Responsible to the board of directors for all operations and execution of the strategic plan, oversight of all employees
2. <u>Tom Spencer</u>	<u>Director of Communications</u>	Responsible for website, quarterly journal, annual conference planning
3. <u>Abby Gray</u>	<u>Secretary</u>	Receptionist; clerical work; membership renewals; conference vendor coordinator
4. <u>Susanna Knittel</u>	<u>Treasurer</u>	Bookkeeping, billing, accounts payable, accounts receivable

See brief personal education/experience for each employee on next page.

Section V (Agency Professional Employees) -- Continued

Position

Education & Experience

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Executive Director | BS Aeronautical Engineering, U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD; MA National Policy & Strategy, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI; CAPT (USN-Ret); 14 years school board experience (2yrs: Calvary Classical School, Hampton, VA; 12 years Logos School; Moscow, ID); 5 years board of governors, New Saint Andrews College, Moscow, ID |
| 2. Director of Communications | BA Education & History, Washington State University; MA Education Administration, University of Idaho; 20-years of experience as Secondary Principal, Logos School, Moscow, ID |
| 3. Secretary | AA Liberal Arts, New Saint Andrews College, Moscow, ID |
| 4. Treasurer | BA in English Literature, University of Idaho; completed two accounting courses at University of Idaho; bookkeeper for small businesses since 2008, accounts payable for Economic Modeling Specialists, International, Moscow, Idaho since 2011 |

Section VI (Types of Membership)

A. Does your agency allow member schools to operate satellite home schools as defined in T.C.A. 49-6-3050(a)(2)?

Yes X

No

B. Describe the levels or types of membership granted to schools in your agency.

<u>Type of Membership</u>	<u>Description</u>
1. <u>Member school</u>	<u>Start-up to full K-12 as long as committed to ACCS membership requirements and progressing towards them; in the U.S.</u>
2. <u>Charter member school</u>	<u>Same as above, but contributed to funding the Association during its inception; closed category since December 31, 1995</u>
3. <u>International member school</u>	<u>Same as member school, but located outside the U.S.</u>
4. <u>Transition member school (New)</u>	<u>Existing Christian school adopting the classical Christian model, follows requirements for member school, but allows time for transition</u>

NOTE: Membership is a “low” bar, while accreditation is in addition to membership, and is a “high” bar. ACCS only accredits ACCS member schools. ACCS allows for schools to be accredited by other organizations if they chose, and ACCS even allows for dual-accreditation. While ACCS strongly encourages each member school to become accredited, it does not mandate accreditation for all member schools.

Section VII (General Policy for Accepting Member Schools)

Describe the general policy of the agency for accepting member schools. (Examples: funding source, denominational ties, meeting agency standards, etc.)

To be approved as an ACCS member school, a school must:

- be in agreement with the ACCS confession of faith (a Protestant, evangelical statement)
- be committed to conforming to the pattern of the Trivium as put forth in the ACCS mission statement
- be committed to furthering the work of ACCS, its, goals, purposes, mission, and objectives
- be committed to providing a minimum of two years of Latin or Greek instruction for each student
- be committed to providing a minimum of one year of formal logic instruction for each student in the secondary
- be committed to providing a minimum of one year of rhetoric instruction for each student in the secondary
- be committed to a full K-12 program or explain how it will be provided if not by the applying school
- pay an annual dues as determined by the ACCS board of directors

NOTE: Again, membership is a “low” bar, while accreditation is in addition to membership, and it is a “high” bar. ACCS views membership in the Association as prerequisite to accreditation.

Accreditation types (ACCS website: www.accsedu.org > School Resources > School Accreditation)

Academy: ACCS uses this term to designate schools that are day-schools, meeting five full days per week in a “brick and mortar” facility. Students are under the instruction of hired teachers who are accountable to a school administrator under the oversight of a board of directors.

Conservatory: ACCS uses this term to designate schools that meet other than five full days per week, such as five half-days per week or three full days per week in a “brick and mortar” facility. Students are under the instruction of hired teachers who are accountable to a school administrator under the oversight of a board of directors.

Accreditation categories: (Accreditation Handbook, Section VIII, p 12):

After a school has gone through the accreditation visit, it will be assigned an accreditation status by the ACCS Board of Directors. The three categories of accredited status are listed and explained below.

A. *Provisionally Accredited Status* is an accredited status granted to those schools that have completed their initial self-study and on-site visit but have yet to graduate their first senior class or have discrepancies that must be corrected before they can be granted Accredited Status. Schools assigned Provisionally Accredited status may be granted up to two years (depending upon the nature and difficulty of the discrepancy) to correct all reported discrepancies and may require a subsequent accreditation visit depending on the nature of the discrepancies.

B. *Accredited Status* is granted to those schools which meet both the initial conditions for eligibility and the criteria for accreditation as determined by the ACCS Board of Directors.

Section VII (General Policy for Accepting Member Schools) -- Continued

C. *Probationary Status.* Schools that had been successfully accredited in the past, but on a subsequent accreditation renewal have failed to meet the ACCS accreditation standards will be placed on probationary status for no less than two years and be provided a specific list of discrepancies. If after the minimum two year probationary period the school still fails to meet each of the ACCS accreditation guidelines, the school will have its accreditation status removed by ACCS. The school may reapply for accreditation when it can substantially document that it has corrected all of the outstanding discrepancies, and submits an application for accreditation. The subsequent accreditation process will be considered as though it was a first-time accreditation which would include all fees, expenses and documentation. The above notwithstanding, a school placed on Probationary Status may appeal to the ACCS Board at any time with proof that the issues which resulted in Probationary Status have been corrected.

Accreditation Results	Implications	Accreditation Status	Consequence/Assignment
Major Discrepancy ¹	Will seriously impair the quality of education	Initial Accreditation	Failure or Provisional Accreditation. If Provisional, the school must correct all identified discrepancies within the specified time frame; will likely require another site visit. Candidate for Accreditation status will be retained by a school that has failed accreditation as a result of excessive discrepancies as determined by the ACCS Board. This status will last for up to two years to correct all discrepancies and reschedule another site visit.
Minor Discrepancies ²	Will mildly impair the quality of education	Initial Accreditation	Provisional Accreditation. Must correct all identified discrepancies within specified time frame; may possibly require another site visit
No committee identified discrepancies, but ACCS board identified discrepancy(ies)	May have long-term detrimental impact on the sustained operation of the school.	Initial Accreditation	Provisional Accreditation. Must correct all identified discrepancies within the specified time frame: may possibly require another site visit.
No Discrepancies	None	Initial Accreditation	Assigned accredited status for two years until first renewal visit

Recommendations ³	May help the school's long-term performance	All categories	None
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¹ **Major Discrepancy.** A major discrepancy is defined as the failure of a school to meet one of the criteria listed in Section E, **Criteria for Accreditation.**

² **Minor Discrepancy.** A minor discrepancy is defined as the school not adequately meeting one of the criteria listed in Section E, **Criteria for Accreditation.** Should the Accreditation Committee or the Board of Directors determine that the accumulation of minor discrepancies is so numerous that their aggregate seriously impairs the quality of education, the sum total may be designated as a major discrepancy.

³ **Recommendations.** These are suggested changes or improvements that all committee members agree on and that are based on experience and directly related to the ACCS Criteria for Accreditation. Individual committee members may make additional suggestions, but they will not be included as a part of the accreditation report.

Renewal Results	Implications	Accreditation Status	Consequence/assignment
Major Discrepancy ¹	Will seriously impair the quality of education process	Provisional Status	Fail accreditation; must restart accreditation
		Accredited Status	Probationary Status. Must correct all discrepancies within specified time frame; will likely require another site visit
		Probationary Status	Fail accreditation; must restart accreditation process
Minor Discrepancies ²	Will mildly impair the quality of education	Provisional Status	Fail accreditation; must restart accreditation process
		Accredited Status	Probationary Status. Must correct all identified discrepancies within specified time frame; may possibly require another site visit
		Probationary Status	Fail accreditation; must restart accreditation process
No Discrepancies	None	Accredited Status	May be assigned up to five years before the next visit
Recommendations ³	May help the school's long term performance	All categories	Although no action is long term performance mandated, a written comment is required for each recommendation prior to the next accreditation visit

Section VIII (Agency's Member School Approval Process)

A. Explain the agency's school approval procedure by listing the steps in these processes.

1. Initial approval process for a member school;

(Accreditation Handbook, Section VII, pp. 7-9)

The means of conducting the on-going review of those schools which have formally applied to ACCS for accreditation and have been approved as a Candidate for Accreditation will be in accordance with the following guidelines:

A. *Self-Study Documentation.* The school applying for accreditation must submit a self-study that specifically documents each of the Criteria for Accreditation listed in Section VI above. This documentation package must be postmarked **no later than one year** from the date of the school's notification of having been approved as a Candidate for Accreditation, and sent to the ACCS Executive Director for initial review and feedback. Failure to do so will result in termination of the school's approval as a Candidate for Accreditation. The documentation package is the school's means to substantiate that it meets all of the **Criteria for Accreditation**. This package must include, in addition to the documentation of the Section VI items required above, a current approved copy of both the school's bylaws and its policy manual. In addition, the documentation package must include examples of student work from each grade, such as routine homework assignments, quizzes and/or exams.

1. Once any deficiencies noted in the Executive Director's review have been addressed, the school will be directed to send a copy of the documentation package to each member of an Accreditation Committee appointed by the ACCS Executive Director. The following time-line and guidance applies:
2. The Executive Director will request dates for the visit at least four months out to allow time for identifying the accreditation committee and time for them to review the school's documentation package.
3. Schools must provide all required/requested documentation directly to the visiting committee members at least three months prior to a desired visit. The Executive Director will also provide any comments from his review to the assigned committee.
4. The Committee shall be given one month to read through all material prior to any firm dates or flights being arranged. This will allow time for the committee to evaluate the suitability of a visit to the school based on the documentation review.
5. The committee members shall be required to submit their (individual) comments and recommendations to the Executive Director after reviewing the materials as to whether a visit is warranted or not. If not, then the Executive Director will notify the school with the stated reasons, and allow the school up to six months to address the indicated problems. If a school fails to address the problems, by default, the school must begin the process anew.
6. Once the committee agrees that the school merits a visit, the Executive Director will notify the school to make local arrangements for the visit and have the committee members make their travel arrangements.

B. Accreditation Committee

1. An Accreditation Committee will be appointed by the ACCS Executive Director for each school

Section VIII (Agency's Member School Approval Process)--Continued

applying for accreditation. The Committee will be composed of three people from among the ACCS Board of Directors (including former ACCS directors who have had experience on an ACCS accreditation committee), the ACCS Executive Director, or the Superintendent (or equivalent) of an accredited ACCS school of equivalent or greater enrollment than the school being evaluated. Committee members may not be drawn from personnel attached to the school undergoing the accreditation.

2. When feasible, ACCS may also assign a member from non-accredited school that has been approved as a Candidate for Accreditation. The purpose of this assignment would be to provide training in preparation for the candidate school's subsequent on-site visit. This member must pay for his own expenses, and his participation is strictly observational.
3. All accreditation committee members are required to have read the most current version of the ACCS Accreditation Procedures which will be forwarded to them at least two months prior to the scheduled school visit.
4. One of the experienced team members will be assigned responsibility of overseeing the inexperienced committee members and helping instruct them in how and what to look for.
5. On-site visits by an Accreditation Committee are required for accreditation.
6. The Accreditation Committee is authorized to request additional information from the applying school if that information is essential to the accreditation process. No individual Accreditation Committee member is authorized to request information on his own; only the Accreditation Committee may request such information through the Committee Chair. The Committee Chair is appointed by the Executive Director and will typically be the person on the committee with the most experience with ACCS accreditations.
7. The Accreditation Committee may call on the expertise of qualified persons who are not assigned to the committee to assist them on specific questions relating to the school accreditation if needed. Such persons will be listed in the report and the specific area(s) in which they provided assistance.

C. *Written Report.* The Accreditation Committee will provide a written report and make a recommendation on accreditation to the ACCS Board. A majority decision by the ACCS Board is required for a school to be accredited. The following guidelines will govern the process of accreditation/accreditation renewal by the ACCS Board upon completion of the accreditation/accreditation renewal visit:

1. The Accreditation Committee Chair will meet with the head of school or equivalent to verbally communicate general impressions that will be included in the written report that should be received within three weeks following the visit.
2. The Accreditation Committee will complete a written report within three weeks and send it to the Executive Director for review. Any comments, either commendations or discrepancies, must be documented. The committee must substantiate, by example or illustration, all comments included in the report.
3. The Executive Director will review the written report for compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation.
4. Within one month of the site visit, the Executive Director will send the written report to the school. The school may submit a written response within 30 days that will be attached to the report.

Section VIII (Agency's Member School Approval Process) -- Continued

5. The Executive Director will send a copy of the report and the school's written response (if one is sent by the school) to the ACCS Board of Directors.
6. The ACCS Board of Directors will review the written report from the Accreditation Committee and any written response from the school, and will make the determination within 30 days of receipt of the report whether the school will be accredited or not. The ACCS Board may request additional input from the Accreditation Committee, either in writing or verbally. The board determination will be made by a majority vote either in person or via email or phone by individual board members to the Executive Director. Such a decision will be subsequently ratified at the next scheduled board meeting, and entered in the minutes. Any negative vote will require a special board meeting. For administrative purposes, the on-site visit date will constitute the date of accreditation. Extenuating circumstances such as schedules and analysis may delay the process. Administrative delays may not be argued as a reason to overturn a decision not to accredit a school.
7. The Executive Director will report the board's determination to the school along with any germane comments.

NOTE: Also please see the response to TN SBOE application Section VI above.

2. Annual re-evaluation process for a member school;
- Each year in August-September, schools must renew their membership with ACCS. ACCS accredited schools must also submit a sheet that indicates if the school has made any significant changes to its bylaws, policies, and/or curriculum guides. Any substantial changes must be accompanied by submission of documentation so the executive director can verify that it does not have any material effect on the school's accredited status.

NOTE: Please see attached Accredited ACCS School Annual Questionnaire

3. Revocation of approval/appeals procedures;

(Accreditation Handbook, Section VII, p. 10)

F. *Denial and Termination.* Adverse decisions regarding the termination or denial of accreditation will be for appropriate and verifiable reasons consistent with the letter and spirit of these standards.

G. *Appeals Process.*

1. There will be no change in the current accreditation status of a school pending disposition of an appeal.
2. The appealing school has the right to a hearing before the appeal body, either the ACCS Board of Directors, or an Executive Committee of the Board assigned for that purpose.
3. The ACCS Board of Directors is the final arbiter in assigning ACCS accredited status to ACCS member schools. If a school is being recommended for anything other than

Section VIII (Agency's Member School Approval Process) -- Continued

accredited status, they may appeal the report and recommendation from the accreditation committee to the ACCS Board of Directors. The school will have 30 days to make their appeal in writing and provide sufficient documentation to substantiate their appeal. This appeal will be forwarded to the ACCS Board via the Executive Director.

4. The ACCS Executive Director will review and forward the appeal and supporting materials to the ACCS Board of Directors, with his recommendation.
5. The ACCS Board of Directors shall review the appeal and supporting documentation and make a determination on the appeal within 30 days or receipt.
6. The ACCS Executive Director shall respond in writing on behalf of the Board of Directors to the Head of the appealing school with the board's final determination. A copy of the final disposition shall be sent (as required) to the applicable accreditation oversight organization(s) of which ACCS is a member along with a copy of the appeal and the school's supporting documentation.
7. Any expenses that may arise as a result of the appeal will be borne by the appealing school.
8. Appeals will not be permitted to schools that fail to undergo a renewal visit at the end of their probation period.

4. Technical assistance provided to address a member school's deficiencies;

- Schools are encouraged to contact the ACCS executive director who advises them on the best ACCS accredited schools to contact for assistance with identified discrepancies if the executive director is unable to directly address the discrepancy himself. This includes teacher training, assistance with administrative aspects, assistance with development and finances, and any other aspect of school operation.
- ACCS also provides additional assistance in the way of the following services (See the ACCS website: www.accsedu.org > School Resources):
 - Legal Consulting
 - Development & Stewardship Assistance
 - Standardized Testing
 - Chants & Songs (for grammar stage teachers)
 - Marketing Resources
 - ACCS Sample School Budget
 - Document Exchange
- Please see attached ACCS Member Benefits brochure

5. Internal agency review process for school approval procedure;

(Accreditation Handbook, Section V, p4)

- A. When a school applies to become a Candidate for Accreditation, the Executive Director will review all submitted documentation for completeness.
- B. After a successful review of the application and documentation, the Executive Director will vet the school's name to the board requesting that any board member with personal concerns about that school share those concerns in writing with the Executive Director. The written statement should include the reasons for those concerns and which ACCS accreditation standard(s) apply. The information provided must be first-hand knowledge including the date(s) for when the information was applicable, and must be provided to the Executive Director within two weeks of his notice to the board.

Section VIII (Agency's Member School Approval Process) -- Continued

- C. As part of the candidacy approval letter, the Executive Director will notify the school of these areas of concern. The information will be made available to the ACCS board and also to the visit committee. The ACCS board should meet within a month, as necessary, to discuss the concerns. The school will be told that the visit committee will investigate the area(s) of concern during their document review and school visit. Comments addressing this area of concern should be expected in the visit committee's draft report to the school and the ACCS board.
- D. The notification to the school is intended to provide the school with the opportunity to provide information relating to the area(s) of concern. As always, the school may provide further information regarding this matter in their written statement provided in response to the visit committee report.

(Accreditation Handbook, Section VII, p 9)

- 3. The Executive Director will review the written report for compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation.
 - 4. Within one month of the site visit, the Executive Director will send the written report to the school. The school may submit a written response within 30 days that will be attached to the report.
 - 5. The Executive Director will send a copy of the report and the school's written response (if one is sent by the school) to the ACCS Board of Directors.
 - 6. The ACCS Board of Directors will review the written report from the Accreditation Committee and any written response from the school, and will make the determination within 30 days of receipt of the report whether the school will be accredited or not. The ACCS Board may request additional input from the Accreditation Committee, either in writing or verbally. The board determination will be made by a majority vote either in person or via email or phone by individual board members to the Executive Director. Such a decision will be subsequently ratified at the next scheduled board meeting, and entered in the minutes. Any negative vote will require a special board meeting. For administrative purposes, the on-site visit date will constitute the date of accreditation. Extenuating circumstances such as schedules and analysis may delay the process. Administrative delays may not be argued as a reason to overturn a decision not to accredit a school.
6. Other process as appropriate.

(Accreditation Handbook, Section VII, 9)

D. *General Philosophy.*

- 1. Notwithstanding all the previously listed items that must be complied with, it is important to realize that not all circumstances and situations can be adequately addressed in specifics in this accreditation policy. Scripture doesn't teach and life is not best lived by a simple set of check-boxes. Wisdom is always the God-given key.
- 2. It has always been the intent of ACCS to accredit schools in the most meaningful way.
- 3. It is for this reason that schools seeking accreditation must realize and permit the ACCS accreditors to delve into any matters that seem relevant to them that might not have been specifically listed above. Furthermore, it must be understood that a school seeking accreditation with ACCS may be turned down even though it has met all the criteria at a "technical" level. The failure would be because they did not meet the essence of what is intended by the specific written guidelines. Such a decision would automatically be appealed to the entire ACCS board by the Executive Director and the affected school.

Section VIII (Agency's Member School Approval Process) -- Continued

- B. Attach all documents which directly affect this item, including an application form and a current copy of your approval procedure.

Please see the ACCS Accreditation Handbook which includes the application on page 3, and the approval criteria on pages 13 and 14. A copy of the application is also attached.

Section IX (Course Title Approved by the Agency)

- A. List or attach a list of all subject and/or course titles which the agency approves for grades K-12 and the grade level(s) at which each course is taught.

ACCS verifies the presence of the following courses in the indicated grade ranges. Additional courses may be taught and always are, but these are the minimum.

(Accreditation Handbook, Section VI, p. 7, subparagraph B)

2. The entire curriculum must be documented in a clear and specific manner within the school's curriculum guide(s).
3. The academic program must require the following for all students:

Grammar (K-6)

- a) for all schools in their elementary academic program, instruction in reading through use of phonics,
- b) at least four years of Latin or Greek instruction, with at least two years in the dialectic or rhetoric stages,

Secondary (7-12)

- c) for all schools in their secondary education, at least one year each of formal logic and formal rhetoric,
- d) training in classical and modern Western history and literature,
- e) training in writing (both prose and poetry), grammar, spelling, and composition,
- f) training in the Scriptures, to include a well-integrated scriptural understanding of all subjects,
- g) training in mathematics, algebra, geometry, and trigonometry as a minimum,
- h) training in general science, biology, chemistry, and an opportunity to take physics,
- i) an opportunity to take apologetics,
- j) general instruction and training in the arts and music throughout the Trivium.

Section X (Licensure and Evaluation System)

A. Explain the agency's professional licensure procedures. Include:

1. The process for obtaining a license;

(Please see the attached ACCS Teacher Certification Guidelines dated 6/23/2004, and copied below for convenience.)

Purpose: Teacher certification should verify the presence of demonstrable philosophical understanding and competent teaching skills in the one certified.

Guidelines: Certification is awarded to a teacher who can demonstrate that he or she has met the following primary requirements. The categories listed below are important and none may be excluded. However, ACCS desires to establish a somewhat flexible process for demonstrating competence. The measures of competence listed below are presumed to be those most common to classical, Christian schools. They are not meant to be the only means to demonstrate competence. School administrators may substitute alternative forms of assessment of teacher competencies as they deem them necessary and appropriate.

Once the administrator of an ACCS accredited school has established the school-specific guidelines in accordance with the below framework, it must be submitted to the ACCS Executive Director for mutual concurrence before it will become the accepted norm for that school.

Verification: The local school administrator of a school that has earned ACCS accreditation is authorized to determine whether competency has been demonstrated for purposes of ACCS Teacher Certification. The school administrator is only authorized to grant teacher certification to teachers who work for the same school as the administrator. However, teachers themselves will receive a certificate acknowledging their certification. Teachers ought to expect to be able to transfer this certificate and status as an ACCS certified teacher to any other ACCS member school.

When a teacher completes the requirements for a given level of competency, the administrator will need to send a letter to ACCS indicating the teacher's name, the level to which attained, and the date it was attained. ACCS will record this information in our database and mail back a certificate for the administrator to sign and present to the teacher, commemorating the achievement.

2. The educational and/or experience requirements for obtaining a license.

(From ACCS Teacher Certification Guidelines dated 6/23/2004)

Provisional Certification: Candidates for a provisional teaching certificate must demonstrate that they have met the following qualifications.

I. Philosophy of Christian Education

Evidenced by the submission of a written paper to the administrator for review after completing requisite readings.

II. Philosophy of Classical Education

Evidenced by the submission of a written paper to the administrator for review after completing requisite readings.

Section X (Licensure and Evaluation System) -- Continued

III. Knowledge of Subject Matter

Evidenced by the successful completion of thirty hours of college credit in the main content area.

IV. Knowledge of Children

Best evidenced by parenting of own children. May be enhanced, or if childless, introduced through the study of children's development and training, according to biblically grounded authors. In addition, prior experience with children of the applicable age(s).

V. Knowledge of the Teaching Process

Evidenced by reading and providing some written response to "The Seven Laws of Teaching."

Permanent Certification: Candidates for a permanent teaching certificate must demonstrate that they have met the following qualifications.

I. Completion of all requirements for the Provisional Certification

II. Demonstration of Successful Teaching

A minimum of three years of successful teaching experience at an ACCS accredited school. Success is measured by the receipt of positive personnel evaluations during that three year period.

III. Evidence of Continual Learning

Documented and personal evidence that teachers are continuing to learn and grow in their interest and knowledge of the above areas, particularly in their understanding and application of the classical, Christian philosophy. Two practical demonstrations of this continuing interest is the amount and type of reading done, and the involvement of the teacher in the development of uniquely classical curriculum within the school.

Master's Certification: Candidates for a master's teaching certificate must demonstrate that they have met the following qualifications.

I. Completion of all requirements for the Permanent Certification

II. Evidence of training in the Trivium.

The teacher will demonstrate personal knowledge and understanding of Logic and Rhetoric.

Attach all documents which directly affect this item, including pamphlets and other descriptive information.

(See the attached document: ACCS Teacher Certification)

Section X (Licensure and Evaluation System)

3. The system by which the agency maintains licensure records for all individuals licensed by the agency.

When the accredited ACCS school headmaster submits a list of teachers and their most recent level of certification, the ACCS executive director approves the list and gives it to the ACCS secretary to record. The secretary generates an office list of the names and level of certification for each teacher. The appropriate certificates are then created and printed. Each is stamped with the ACCS seal and signed by the Executive Director. With each certificate sent, the secretary also encloses a congratulatory letter including the date of certification and the level attained. These letters are saved into the appropriate school folder in the ACCS office. The ACCS secretary therefore maintains a tracking list of all teachers' names, the level of certification attained, the dates of attainment, and the school where they attained each level of certification.

4. Assurance that all professional personnel are properly licensed.

(Accreditation Handbook, Section VI, p 7)

The ACCS accreditation standards require a review of the school's progress in certifying its teachers:

8. RENEWAL ONLY–The school must provide a record of the implementation of the school's teacher certification plan and the status of each teacher in that plan.

- B. Describe the teacher evaluation system.

Teachers are generally observed twice a year by the school's headmaster or the teachers' direct supervisor (usually the principal, but sometimes the lead teacher for the group). The schools generate their own observations forms which include applying the Seven Laws of Teaching and an understanding and application of the applicable tools of learning based on the Trivium model. Other traits may be observed and commented on as determined by each school.

(Accreditation Handbook, Section VI, subparagraph D. p 7)

2. Teaching methods are to be largely consistent with and clearly applying the *Seven Laws of Teaching* (as described in the book by John Milton Gregory).

3. Instructional methods should evidence an understanding and application of the applicable "tools of learning." That is, grammatical methods should be clearly applied at all levels of the grammar stage, dialectic techniques should be used throughout that level, and rhetoric practically observed in the upper grades.

Teachers receive their evaluations which are discussed with them by the headmaster or their immediate supervisor, signed and filed in the teacher's personnel file which is kept locked in a suitable container in a secure space (usually, the head of school's office).

Section XI (Administration)

Attach documentation that each member school meets minimum standards as stated in Rule 0520-07-2-.03 (c) 9.

- When a school applies for ACCS accreditation, the school must provide:
3. Verification from the School Board that the school is not in violation of state law in the state in which the school resides.
 - Further, the Accreditation Handbook (Section VI, subparagraph D, p 7) requires:
 4. The school must show that its program for assigning teaching responsibilities and student-faculty ratio is consonant with its stated goals.
 - The Accreditation Handbook (Section VI, subparagraph B, p 6) requires:
 1. The complete school program inclusive of graduation requirements must be well-organized, realistic, and publicized in its entirety.
 - The Accreditation Handbook (Section VI, subparagraph C, p 6) requires:
 3. The school must have complete, accurate, legible, and securely maintained records. These are to include board minutes, school personnel files, student files, and administrative reports.
 4. The school must have a school board approved policy that provides for the permanent maintenance of all student records in the event that the school must close.
 - The Accreditation Handbook (Section VI, subparagraph B, p 6) requires:
 4. The academic program will be regularly evaluated by documented, annual administration of an appropriate, nationally recognized, standardized exam.
 - Covering all other requirements the Accreditation Handbook (Application Form, line 3, p 2) requires:
 3. Verification from the School Board that the school is not in violation of state law in the state in which the school resides.

Section XII (Facilities)

Describe or provide a copy of the standards for the following:

1. Approval of plans and specifications regarding planning of new buildings and/or alterations

The ACCS Accreditation application requires:

3. Verification from the School Board that the school is not in violation of state law in the state in which the school resides.

2. Health and safety

The Accreditation Handbook (Section VI, subparagraph D, p 7) requires:

7. The school must meet local health and safety requirements.

3. Classrooms

The ACCS Accreditation application requires:

3. Verification from the School Board that the school is not in violation of state law in the state in which the school resides.

The ACCS Accreditation Handbook (Section VI, p 7) requires:

D. Faculty and Instructional Resources - The school must have sufficient faculty, instructional, and facility resources to achieve its mission.

4. Facilities for handicap

The ACCS Accreditation application requires:

3. Verification from the School Board that the school is not in violation of state law in the state in which the school resides.

The ACCS Accreditation Handbook (Section VI, p 7) requires:

D. Faculty and Instructional Resources - The school must have sufficient faculty, instructional, and facility resources to achieve its mission.

5. Laboratories

The ACCS Accreditation application requires:

3. Verification from the School Board that the school is not in violation of state law in the state in which the school resides.

The ACCS Accreditation Handbook (Section VI, p 7) requires:

D. Faculty and Instructional Resources - The school must have sufficient faculty, instructional, and facility resources to achieve its mission.

Section XII (Facilities) -- Continued

6. Library/Media

The Accreditation Handbook (Section VI, subparagraph D, p 7) requires:

5. An obvious love and respect for reading and books should be evident throughout the entire school's program. For example, there should be a wide variety of literature available to the students in classroom and/or school libraries.

7. Physical education/playground

The ACCS Accreditation application requires:

3. Verification from the School Board that the school is not in violation of state law in the state in which the school resides.

The ACCS Accreditation Handbook (Section VI, p 7) requires:

D. Faculty and Instructional Resources - The school must have sufficient faculty, instructional, and facility resources to achieve its mission.

8. School fire safety codes

The ACCS Accreditation application requires:

3. Verification from the School Board that the school is not in violation of state law in the state in which the school resides.

The Accreditation Handbook (Section VI, subparagraph D, p 7) requires:

7. The school must meet local health and safety requirements.

List of attachments:

- ACCS information brochure
- ACCS Mission Statement
- Confession of Faith
- ACCS Accreditation Handbook
- ACCS Accreditation Application
- Trivium Diagram
- Accredited ACCS School Annual Questionnaire
- ACCS Member Benefits brochure