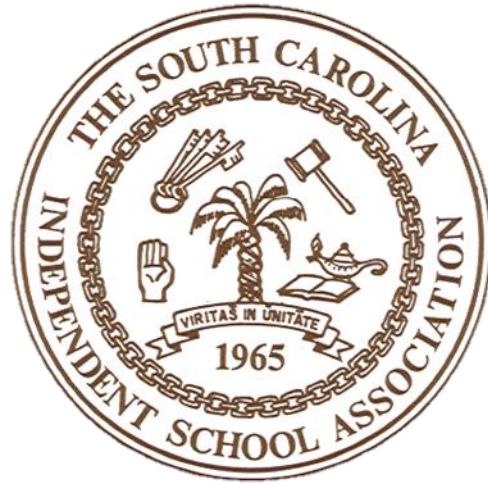# The South Carolina Independent School Association

Exceptional Learning Schools Accreditation Packet

CONTENTS:

INTRODUCTION TO SCISA ACCREDITATION

All member schools must pass minimum SCISA accreditation standards within 18 months of being approved for membership by the Board of Directors.

ELS Accreditation requires a one-day visit by two (enrollment under 400 students) university instructors, or three (enrollment over 400 students) and one SCISA Headmaster/Representative. You will be asked to choose 6 preference dates for your visit and the exact date will be confirmed with you.

Your team will prepare a packet to be scanned and emailed to the Accreditation Coordinator at least 2 weeks prior to your visit. The contents of the following 4 items:

1. A completed SELF STUDY REPORT covering 13 subjects (only 12 for Initial Accreditation)
2. The school's Long-Range Plan (see item L of the Standards)
3. Your school's current ANNUAL REPORT
4. Your school's most current STANDARDIZED TESTS

Complete instructions are included in this packet along with other requirements for a successful visit.

You will be asked to prepare a comfortable meeting room for your visitors and plan to serve lunch. Please have your Board President, Chairman or some other member of your Board to be available during lunch to meet with the team for approximately thirty (30) minutes.

SCISA ECA ACCREDITATION PREFERENCE DATES

SCISA ELS ACCREDITATION requires a one-day visit by two (enrollment under 400) university instructors, or three (enrollment over 400) university instructors, and one SCISA headmaster. To assist us in preparing for your visit, please list in the **order of preference,** six (6) dates that would be good for your school. As much as possible we will try to schedule the visit on one of your choice dates. Of course, before any plans are finalized, we will confirm everything with you.

The dates of your visit should be normal school days. Check the SCISA and the SCISAA calendars to avoid conflicts. Also, do not select dates that could have groups of students or faculty members off campus for field trips, extracurricular activities, etc. Visitors must see teachers teaching during the visit.

After the dates are determined, we will contact a SCISA Headmaster/Representative to be an evaluator on your visit. If there is someone you would prefer that we do NOT ask, please let us know in the space provided below.

School_____Headmaster_____

Address_____ City _____ Zip code_____

Total enrollment K-5 through last grade served _____

Your school serves grades _____ through _____

Number of full-time teachers _____   Number of part-time teachers _____

ATTACHED IS A SCISA ACTIVITY CALENDAR. BE SURE YOU DO NOT SELECT DATES FOR YOUR VISIT THAT WOULD FALL ON THE DAYS OF AN ACTIVITY IN WHICH YOU MIGHT WISH TO PARTICIPATE. YOU MUST BE READY FOR YOUR VISIT ON THE EARLIEST DATE SELECTED.

CHOICE OF DATES IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

You must include one choice per month between _____ & _____.

1. _____   2. _____   3. _____   4. _____   5. _____

Is there a headmaster you prefer we NOT ask to be on your visit? Name: _____

You will be required to complete this form and bring it with you to the mandatory meeting prior to your scheduled visit.

ACCREDITATION MATERIALS

Scan & Email to SCISA

1. *School Name _____ SELF-STUDY REPORT*

   Using the ELS ACCREDITATION SELF-STUDY QUESTIONS and following the directions to the letter!

2. *School Name _____ LONG RANGE PLAN*

   Using the REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ACCREDITED SCHOOL (Item L) ensuring the document is complete and contains all 6 of the specific points.

3. *School Name _____ CURRENT SCISA ANNUAL REPORT*

4. *School Name _____ STANDARDIZED TESTS*

   Your school's most current MASTER LIST SUMMARY page for each grade tested. Also provide PSAT scores/documents for students tested in the 10th or 11th grade.

Email each numbered item separately at least two weeks before your on-site visit.

ACCREDITATION MATERIALS

Available for visitors on the day of your visit:

1. Blank report cards, blank permanent record cards, blank application forms and contracts, blank testing applications or preliminary application.

2. School brochure or catalog; student handbook, faculty handbook, faculty handbook, and the school or Board policy handbook

3. Copy of the SCISA Accreditation Standards for an Accredited School revised and adopted April 2020.

4. Have available one copy of the school's curriculum guides and be able to demonstrate how your school is managing the curriculum.

5. A diagram indicating classroom locations with room numbers and the teacher assigned to that room.

6. A copy of your Internal Review Diagnostic.

7. A copy of your EAP (Emergency Action Plan).

8. A copy of your current Safety Audit.

9. A copy of your report and checklist from your previous visit (Does not apply to your Initial Accreditation.

These materials must be readily available in the workroom designated to your visiting team members.

ELS ACCREDITATION SELF-STUDY QUESTIONS

Organize and type the self-study report using the following format:

1. Make a cover page. Include the school's name and address, headmaster's name, assistant headmaster's and any other administrators name (s), and date of the report.

2. Use a **separate page** to answer each of the numbered questions. First, **restate the questions**, and then follow with the answer. Number each page of the report.

   The benefits of the self-study are two-fold:
   1. To promote the Board, the Headmaster, and Faculty to enter into a Self-study.
   2. To acquaint the Visitation Team with the operations of the school in advance of their visit.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

1. **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**
   a) What does the school conceive its mission to be? E.g., solely college preparatory? Primarily college preparatory? General?
   b) If the mission includes preparation of non-college students, what special curriculum and career guidance does the school have for those students?
   c) State the Athletic Philosophy. (for athletic member schools)

2. **ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION**
   a) What is the composition of the Board of Directors?
   b) Is there a clear-cut separation of authority and duties between the Board and the Headmaster?
   c) Does the Headmaster attend all or part of the meetings of the Board?
   d) Is there an Assistant Headmaster?   If so, what are his/her duties and responsibilities?

3. **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM** (As the answers to this section differ from grade to grade, please indicate which grades to which you are referring)
   a) By whom and through what process is the content of the curriculum chosen? Is this content in writing?
   b) What are the mechanics and philosophy of textbook selection? Do textbooks determine the curriculum?
   c) Are entrance tests required? How are the results used?
   d) If the school has a heterogeneous population, what special provisions are made for the different academic levels and needs of the pupils?

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4. **FINANCIAL RESOURCES**
   a) Is there an external audit of the previous year's operation? Please include it.
   b) Is there a line-item budget for the current year's operation? Please include it.
   c) Is there an adequate bookkeeping system for the posting of all income and expenditures? Briefly describe it.
   d) How is purchasing accomplished? Who signs checks? Is there an internal audit?

5. **FACULTY**
   a) How are faculty members recruited, interviewed, and hired?
   b) Is there an official transcript, I-9 form (for all employees hired after November 6, 1989), School Employee Evaluation for Tuberculosis, verification of annual Blood-borne Pathogens Training, and EAP Training on file for every faculty member?
   c) Are teaching workloads equitable?

6. **LIBRARY**
   a) What are the library holdings, including audio-visual equipment? List periodicals and the dates of major reference materials.
   b) Provide documentation of a budget line-item for library acquisitions and audio-visual equipment. (REQUIRED).
   c) Is the librarian trained?
   d) What services does the library offer to the students? To the teachers?

7. **STUDENT SERVICES**
   a) Are counseling and guidance services offered, particularly for the upper level, college-bound students?
   b) How is discipline maintained?
   c) Are entrance and achievement tests administered? Are the results analyzed?
   d) How are student records maintained?
   e) How are health records maintained?

8. **PHYSICAL PLANT**
   a) Is there a floor plan available? If so, please include.
   b) Is there a regular maintenance plan?
   c) Is there an annual Safety Audit? (REQUIRED) A copy must be provided for the visiting team on the day of your visit. (REQUIRED)

9. **PROJECTIONS**
    a) What is the assessment of the school's viability? It's future financial strength? Turnover and retention rates of teachers? Enrollment predictions?
    b) What should be done to strengthen the school's viability.

10. **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**
    a) Describe your procedures for ensuring faculty development for your school.
    b) Complete the attached Professional Development Checklist including both formal and informal professional development.
    c) All teaching faculty must attend the Annual Teachers' Conference within the schools respective 3-5 year accreditation cycle. Proof of attendance is required.

11. **SCHOOL CALENDAR**
    a) Attach the school calendar for the current year.
    b) Compile the number of gross days represented on the calendar (Item II D).
    c) Define a half day at your school.
    d) List the total number of half days in your school calendar.
    e) For what purposes do you schedule a half school day?

12. **INTERNAL REVIEW DIAGNOSTIC**
    a) Rank each category of the review based upon the stated required evidences.
    b) Ranking should be based on compliance of stated evidences.
    c) Provide a narrative summary of your findings.
    d) Ranking Qualifications:
        4 = 75% compliance of evidence or greater.
        3 = 50% to 75% compliance of evidence.
        2 = 25% to 50% compliance of evidence.
        1 = 0% to 25% compliance of evidence.
        NA = Not Applicable.

13. **PREVIOUS VISIT** (Does not apply to initial accreditation)
    a) Provide a list of progress made on recommendations and/or deficiencies written by the visitation committee on your last visit.

REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ACCREDITED SCHOOL

I. An accredited independent elementary school must employ qualified (defined II, B) teachers and other necessary staff personnel, maintain a proper pupil-teacher ratio (defined II G), use a course of study appropriate to its pupils, adopt adequate textbooks approved by appropriate personnel or by a committee on standards representing the SCISA, provide adequate library services and adequate guidance services including annual use of nationally recognized tests to validate local evaluation and to determine proper placement.

II. An accredited independent secondary school must meet the minimum standards set by the SCISA. To be accredited, an independent secondary school must:

A. Employ a school administrator with at least a bachelor's degree who does not teach more than two of the following: Two periods a day or coach two varsity athletic teams, or one of each. An assistant administrator, who teaches less than a full load, is required in schools over 250 enrollment.

B. Employ teachers in grades K5 (hired after January 1994) through 12 whose academic training, experience, or combination of same, fully indicate the professional ability, insight, and enthusiasm necessary to complete classroom assignments satisfactorily. Each teacher in grades K5 through 12 must have a minimum of a state certificate and/or bachelor's degree.

C. Employ a sufficient number of such teachers to sustain a curriculum that shall include one or both of the following:

GENERAL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS:
<u>**Subject Units**</u>

* English:	4
* Mathematics:	3
* Science:	3
* Social Studies (One of these must be a unit in American History):	3
* Physical Education (PE)	1
* Computer Science	1
Electives:	9

* Two units of the same foreign language may be substituted for two of the following three units: One unit of science, one unit of mathematics, or one unit of social studies.

COLLEGE PREPARATORY DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS:

<u>Subject Units</u>

English:	4
Mathematics (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II):	4
Science (Phys. Science, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics, I and/or):	4
Social Studies (American Hist., European Hist., Govt. /Econ. 1/2 each):	3
Foreign Language (Two units of the same language):	2
Physical Education:	1
Computer Science	1
Electives:	8

Appropriate research experiences should be included in the curriculum.

These may apply to one "track" of a high school with more than one curriculum or to a high school as a whole. If only part of the school is meeting these, the administration must be sure the Board, pupils, and parents are aware of which pupils are in which "track," and the school's diploma should indicate the distinction.

A school chartered for diagnosed learning disabilities may receive special consideration in the areas of course requirements and grade level promotion.

Levels in each curriculum as applicable to each individual member school:

FOR ADVANCEMENT TO:	GENERAL DIPLOMA	COLLEGE PREPARATORY
Sophomore (grade 10)	6 units	6 units
Junior (grade 11)	12 units	12 units
Senior (grade 12)	18 units	18 units
Graduation	24 units	24 units

Each member school shall determine eligibility for grade placement according to entrance tests, past records, and the needs of each individual student.

D. Operate the school no fewer than 5 1/2 hours per day for a minimum of 180 school days (gross) per year. This is defined as no less than 175 student school days per session with only three half-day exam days each semester being allowed to count toward the total number of days as a full day. Gross days are defined as student days plus faculty in-service days. One-unit courses meet five days per week for a minimum of 45 minutes each period or the equivalent.

E. Provide an on-campus, centralized (inventoried and controlled) access to sufficient library books, technological and other resources, to supplement and enrich the total school program emphasizing instruction in research skills. Complete library standards are included in accreditation standard packets. Note: Use of off-campus research facilities is encouraged, but this should not take the place of the on-campus facility.

F. Provide adequate guidance services including annual use of nationally recognized achievement tests to validate local evaluation and to determine proper placement. Administer achievement tests to four grades each year and I.Q. tests to at least three grades each year through the SCISA testing program. In addition, P.S.A.T.'s must be given in the 10th or 11th grade.

G. Realize that though the SCISA strongly recommends a maximum class size of 25 pupils per class, schools may increase this number to 28 per class. Any increase above 28 requires action of the school's Board of Directors and must be documented and be available to the SCISA upon request.

H. Keep adequate permanent records on teachers and pupils, including current valid transcripts on all teachers and pupils. An official transcript or copy of the official transcript showing the college seal is required on teachers and administrators.

I. Schools must make provisions for annual faculty development.

J. Administrators and/or school representatives must attend at least one headmasters' meeting (November or March) each year, and are encouraged to attend workshops and take graduate courses.

K. Have curriculum guides which provide a detailed description of the curriculum of the school available for inspection by the visiting team.

L. A school must have a LONG-RANGE PLAN. The Long-Range Plan must include all of the following elements:
1. A three to five-year outlook for the school.
2. A statement of the enrollment goals of the school.
3. A statement of the budget and salary goals of the school.
4. A plan and demonstration of consistency between the school's Mission Statement and the Long-Range Plan.
5. A plan and demonstration of consistency between the school's Curriculum and the Long-Range Plan.
6. Input from the broad school constituency concerning these listed items.

III. A school's physical facilities must meet the applicable federal, state, and local safety, fire, and *health (*definition: including immunizations, School Employee Evaluation For Tuberculosis, and Blood borne Pathogens) regulations. In laboratories these regulations require that the laboratory include eye wash, safety shower, ventilation, gas and water cut-offs located inside the laboratory, two fire extinguishers, and safe storage for flammable substances. The grounds shall provide areas for physical education and recreation and the building shall be maintained to provide a safe, sanitary, and attractive environment for learning.

IV.
A. A school is normally accredited for three years. However, the visiting committee may recommend either of two one year periods of accreditation when it feels the circumstances warrant, including but not limited to, frequent faculty, administration, or trustee turnover and/or a sharp decline in student enrollment.

B. Provisional Accreditation is a one year accreditation of a school that is not currently accredited and meets many of the requirements but needs to improve in certain areas without undue delay. Though this will be most frequently used for schools never before accredited, it may be used for schools which have lost accreditation.

C. Probational Accreditation is a one year extension of a currently held full accreditation when the school does not merit a renewal of accreditation for the full three year term.

D. Effective July 1, 1995, the maximum length of time a school may hold provisional or probational accreditation shall be two years.

E. Each time a school is visited, a $900 accreditation fee will be required in advance. A fee of $75 will be required if an additional on-site visit is required for the school to complete the accreditation requirements or to verify that any deficiencies have been satisfied.

F. The accreditation of any school may be temporarily suspended by the Accreditation Committee, after the Committee's review, if it appears that the school may not be meeting all accreditation standards.

G. Initial Accreditation becomes effective at the Board meeting at which it is approved. ECA and
Advanced accreditation become effective and expire on July 1.

Last revised and adopted April 2020

LIBRARY STANDARDS

(Please use this copy as a guide for evaluating the library)

The South Carolina Independent School Association Accreditation Standards for Media Centers and Libraries will consist of the three specific categories: On-Site Traditional Library, Off-Site Library, and Virtual Library.

ON-SITE TRADITIONAL LIBRARY REQUIREMENTS:

Facilities
- The library shall be in a designated room(s) on campus.
- The library or combination library-study hall designated room must be equipped with tables, chairs, bookshelves, magazine rack, circulation desk and other equipment commensurate with the size of the school.

Books
- The library shall have a minimum of 2000 usable and acceptable books or an average of 10 books per student, whichever is greater.
- These shall be books exclusive of government documents, multiple texts, and pamphlets.
- The collection should be well-balanced and systematically selected for a wide coverage of subjects.
- The elementary library should not contain more than two-thirds of its titles in fiction, and the high school should not contain more than one-third of its titles in fiction.

Reference Materials
- Each school library shall provide a well-rounded collection of basic reference materials needed to satisfy curricular requirements and stimulate intellectual development of students. Reference materials can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Periodicals
- Each school library shall provide an interesting and useful collection of current periodicals to accommodate needs for current information and appeal to personal interests of students. Periodicals and publications can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Professional Materials
- Each library shall provide a central collection of easily accessible professional materials for teachers to keep abreast of trends, developments, research, and techniques both in general and specialized areas of education. Professional materials can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Newspapers
- Each library shall provide a daily newspaper that provides coverage of local, state, and national news. Daily newspapers can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Technology
- Each library shall provide internet access. It is recommended that all students be exposed to automated library systems.
- Each library must have and maintain a DISCUS subscription.

Librarian
- A school shall have a teacher assigned to the library.
- A secondary school shall have a teacher assigned who has library training through SCISA or through an approved mentor program.

OFF-SITE LIBRARY REQUIREMENTS:

Facilities
- The Off-Site Library must be a "public library" facility that is funded by local, county, or state government.
- The library must be within close or walking proximity of the school.
- The use of an Off-Site Library must be approved in writing by SCISA officials.
- All Off-Site Library usage must be approved in advance of an accreditation visit by SCISA officials.

Books
- Off-Site Libraries must shall have a minimum of 2000 usable and acceptable books or an average of 10 books per student, whichever is greater.
- Off-Site Libraries must have books exclusive of government documents, multiple texts, and pamphlets.
- Off-Site Libraries must have a collection that is well-balanced and systematically selected for a wide coverage of subjects.
- Off-Site Libraries for the elementary section should not contain more than two-thirds of its titles in fiction, and the high school section should not contain more than one-third of its titles in fiction.

Reference Materials
- Off-Site Libraries shall provide a well-rounded collection of basic reference materials needed to satisfy curricular requirements and stimulate intellectual development of students. Reference materials can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Periodicals
- Off-Site Libraries shall provide an interesting and useful collection of current periodicals to accommodate needs for current information and appeal to personal interests of students. Periodicals and publications can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Professional Materials
- Off-Site Libraries shall provide a central collection of easily accessible professional materials for teachers to keep abreast of trends, developments, research, and techniques both in general and specialized areas of education. Professional materials can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Newspapers
- Off-Site Libraries shall provide a daily newspaper that provides coverage of local, state, and national news. Daily newspapers can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Technology
- Off-Site Libraries shall provide internet access. It is recommended that all students be exposed to automated library systems.
- Off-Site Libraries must have and maintain a DISCUS subscription.

Librarian
- A school shall have a teacher assigned to conduct off-site library academic and instructional responsibilities.
- A secondary school shall have a teacher assigned who has library training through SCISA or through an approved mentor program.

VIRTUAL LIBRARY REQUIREMENTS:

Facilities
- A Virtual Library shall be in a designated room(s) on the school campus.
- The Virtual Library or combination virtual library-study hall designated room must be equipped with tables, chairs, computers, iPads, tablets, or other electronic devices that can be used by students to access electronic reading and library platforms.
- A specifically designated set of electronic devises must be available in the school's virtual library at all times.
- A multitude of charging ports must be in functional and accessible to support the electronic demands of the virtual library.

Reference Materials
- Virtual Libraries shall provide an electron subscription or portal for a well-rounded collection of basic reference materials needed to satisfy curricular requirements and stimulate intellectual development of students. Reference materials can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Periodicals
- Virtual Libraries shall provide an electronic subscription or portal for interesting and useful collection of current periodicals to accommodate needs for current information and appeal to personal interests of students.

Professional Materials
- Virtual Libraries shall provide an electronic subscription or portal for the collection of easily accessible professional materials for teachers to keep abreast of trends, developments, research, and techniques both in general and specialized areas of education.

Newspapers
- Virtual Libraries shall provide an electronic subscription or portal for a daily newspaper that provides coverage of local, state, and national news.

Technology
- Virtual Libraries shall provide both wireless and hard-wired internet access. It is recommended that all students be exposed to automated library systems.
- Virtual Libraries must have and maintain an active DISCUS subscription.

Librarian
- The school shall have a teacher assigned to conduct virtual library academic and instructional responsibilities.
- A secondary school shall have a teacher assigned who has virtual library training through SCISA or through an approved mentor program.

ACCREDITATION TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

BOOKS – The library shall have a minimum of 2000 usable and acceptable books or an average of 10 books per student, whichever is greater. These shall be books exclusive of government documents, multiple texts, and pamphlets. The collection should be well-balanced and systematically selected for a wide coverage of subjects. The elementary library should not contain more than two-thirds of its titles in fiction, and the high school should not contain more than one-third of its titles in fiction.

NOTE: Titles on CD Rom, computer software, or the internet may be substituted for hard bound books.

REFERENCE MATERIALS – Each school library shall provide a well-rounded collection of basic reference materials needed to satisfy curricular requirements and stimulate intellectual development of students. The collection shall include a current encyclopedia set, an unabridged dictionary, a foreign language and geographical dictionary, a thesaurus, a current atlas and almanac, literary criticisms, and biographies.

MAGAZINES – Each school library shall provide an interesting and useful collection of current periodicals to accommodate needs for current information and appeal to personal interests of students.

PROFESSIONAL MATERIALS – Each library shall provide a central collection of easily accessible professional materials for teachers to keep abreast of trends, developments, research, and techniques both in general and specialized areas of education.

NEWSPAPERS – Each library shall provide a daily newspaper that provides coverage of local, state, and national news.

TECHNOLOGY – Each library shall provide internet access. It is recommended that all students be exposed to automated library systems.

LIBRARIAN – A school shall have a teacher assigned to the library. A secondary school shall have a teacher assigned who has library training through SCISA or through an approved mentor program.

FACILITIES – All schools shall provide a separate library or combination library-study hall equipped with tables, chairs, bookshelves, magazine rack, circulation desk and other equipment commensurate with the size of the school.

South Carolina Independent School Association
P.O. Drawer 690, Orangeburg, SC 29116

Dear Accreditation Team Member,

We appreciate your willingness to serve as an evaluator on the accreditation team listed below. Following are suggestions to help make this a productive visit:

1. Plan to arrive at the school by 8:00 a.m.
2. Conduct an interview with the Head upon arrival.
3. Accreditation team members should divide the areas of responsibility of the visit to best serve the school.
4. Review all curriculum guides.
5. Review the Long-Range Plan (6 points)
6. Visit every classroom and observe each teacher in a teaching situation.
7. Tour the entire school plant and facility.
8. Review all student and personnel records.
9. Review the school's previous accreditation report (s) to be sure any previously reported deficiencies have been satisfied. DOES NOT APPLY TO INITIAL VISIT>
10. Plan a conference with the board chairman or his/her representative and all team members.
11. Plan to interview a cross-section of students and faculty members.
12. Use the entire school day to conduct the visit.
13. After the school day the team should meet to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the school prior to the exit conference.
14. Conduct an exit conference with the Head to share the team's findings.
15. Evaluation reports should be assigned and returned to the SCISA office by _____.

VISIT TO: _____

ADDRESS: _____

 UNIVERSITY TEAM MEMBERS: _____

_____

SCISA HEADMASTER: _____

Copy to: Headmaster of the school to be visited.

ELS ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

ACCREDITATION CHECKLIST

SCHOOL _____DATE _____

Please mark one of the boxes under each statement. A mark of unacceptable requires an explanation in the space provided for comments.

1. The school administrator has at least: (a bachelor's degree for ECA) and (a master's degree for advanced) and does not teach more than two periods a day or coach two varsity athletic teams, or one of each. An assistant administrator who teaches less than a full load is required in schools with over 250 enrolled.

    ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

    Comments:
    _____
    _____

2. The school employs teacher in graded K-5 – 12 whose academic training, experience or combination of same, fully indicate the professional ability, insight, and enthusiasm necessary to complete classroom assignments satisfactorily. Each teacher in grades K-5 – 12 has a minimum of a state certificate and/or a bachelor's degree. A transcript designated by the issuing school as official must be available for each teacher. A student copy or a copy of a copied transcript is not acceptable unless a state certificate is also on file in a fire-proof cabinet. In addition to a transcript, teacher's, administrator's and staff files must include a School Employee Evaluation for Tuberculosis, an I-9 Form for all employees hired after November 6, 1986, and verification of Blood-borne Pathogens Training, and EAP training is required for ALL school employees. (Employee is defined as anyone in direct contact with your students.)

    ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

    Comments:
    _____
    _____
    _____

3. The school employs a sufficient number of teachers to sustain a general or college preparatory curriculum or both.

    ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

    Comments:
    _____
    _____
    _____

4. The school follows the recommendations of SCISA that a maximum class size should be 25 students but increases may be up to 28. Any increase above 28 has been approved by the school's Board of Directors and is documented and available to SCISA.

ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:_____
_____
_____

5. The school has a site-specific Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:_____
_____
_____

6. The school maintains a course of study appropriate to its pupils adhering to either general diploma or college preparatory requirements.

ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:_____
_____
_____

7. The school has curriculum guides which provide a detailed description of the curriculum of the school and proof that it is being managed.

ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:_____
_____
_____

8. The school provides a library science / media arts program with either a centralized (inventoried & controlled) access to sufficient library books, technological and other resources, to supplement and enrich the total school program emphasizing instruction in research skills.

ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:_____
_____
_____

9. The school keeps adequate permanent records on students stored electronically and housed off site, or in a fire-proof cabinet. Student records must include a SC Certificate of Immunization, a current valid transcript, and a SCISAA Parent's Permission form, a SCISAA Medical Form (doctor's certificate), and a signed Warning of Inherent Risk form for athletic members.

      ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

      Comments:_____
      _____
      _____

10. The school provides adequate guidance service including annual use of nationally recognized achievement tests to validate local evaluation and to determine proper placement. The school administers achievement tests to four grades each year and I.Q. tests to three grades each year through a nationally recognized testing service. In addition, PSATs must be given in the 10th or 11th grade.

      ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

      Comments:_____
      _____
      _____

11. The school operates no less than five and one-half hours a day for 180 days (gross) per year. This is defined as no less than 175 student school days per session with only three half-day exam days each semester being allowed to count toward the total number of days as a full day. Gross days are defined as student days plus faculty in-service days. One-unit courses meet five days per week for a minimum of 45 minutes each period or the equivalent.

      ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

      Comments:_____
      _____
      _____

12. The school has adequate laboratory facilities to support the curriculum of the school. These regulations require that the lab include eye wash, safety shower, ventilation, gas and water cut-offs located inside the lab, two fire extinguishers, and safe storage for flammable substances. Physical facilities meet the applicable federal, state, and local safety, fire, and health regulations. The grounds provide areas for physical education and recreation and the building is maintained to provide a safe, sanitary, and attractive environment for learning.

      ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

      Comments:_____
      _____
      _____

13. Administrators and/or school representatives must attend at least one headmasters' meeting (November or March) each year and are encouraged to attend workshops and take graduate courses.

ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

14. Comments:_____
_____
_____

15. Schools make provisions for faculty development either formally or informally.

ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:_____
_____
_____

16. The school has LONG RANGE PLAN which includes each of the following:
    A three to five-year outlook for the school.
    A statement of the enrollment goals of the school.
    A statement of the budget and salary goals of the school.
    A plan and demonstration of consistency between the school's Mission Statement and the Long Range Plan.
    A plan and demonstration of consistency between the school's Curriculum and Long Range Plan.
    Input from the broad school constituency concerning these listed items.

ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:_____
_____
_____

17. There is a clear-cut separation of authority between the Board and the Headmaster. A good working relationship exists between the Board, Headmaster, Faculty, and parents.

ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:_____
_____
_____

18. The school utilizes proper publications to communicate with students, faculty, and parents. (Faculty and Student handbooks)

ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:_____
_____
_____

19. The school has an Athletic Philosophy Statement. (only required for Athletic Members)

        ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

        Comments:_____
        _____
        _____

20. The school performs an annual Safety Audit. A copy must be made available to the visiting team on the day of the visit.

        ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

        Comments:_____
        _____
        _____

21. All teaching faculty has attended the SCISA Annual Teachers' Conference within the schools respective 3-5 year accreditation cycle.

        ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

        Comments:
        _____
        _____
        _____

22. A school representative has attended the mandatory accreditation training within 18 months of the scheduled SCISA visit.

        ACCEPTABLE _____   UNACCEPTABLE _____

        Comments:
        _____
        _____
        _____

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

Teacher	Position	Professional Development (Show three years)	Attendance at SCISA Teachers' Conference

COMPLETE FILES CHECKLISTS

STUDENT FILE:

SC Certificate of Immunization
Valid Transcript

STUDENT ATHLETE FILE:

- SC Certificate of Immunization
- Valid Transcript
- Parental Permission Form
- SCISA Athletic Medical Form
- Warning of Inherent Risk Form

FACULTY FILE:

- Bachelor's Degree Transcript and/or
- State Certificate
- TB Test
- I-9 Form and/or E-Verify
- Annual Training: Blood-borne Pathogen & EAP

STAFF FILE:

- TB Test
- I-9 Form and/or E-Verify
- Annual Training: Blood-borne Pathogen & EAP

Accreditation Day Checklist

_____ Work room arranged for your visitors with tables, chairs, drinks and snacks. The team will get right to work at 8:00.

_____ Select a cross section of both students and parents to be interviewed by the team. Informal teacher interviews can take place during classroom visits

_____The required materials are also located in the work room:

- Blank report cards, blank permanent records, blank formal applications and contracts, blank testing applications or preliminary applications
- School brochure or catalog, student and faculty handbooks and the school or board policy handbook
- Complete current testing results
- One copy of the school's curriculum guides and proof that the curriculum is being managed
- An annotated map of classroom locations, subjects and teachers
- A copy of your Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
- A copy of the SCISA Accreditation Standards for an Accredited School revised and adopted March 2019.

_____ Prepare lunch for the visitors including the board members present (at least the Board Chair). This will be a "working lunch"

_____ Team members are at your school to observe teaching and learning. No testing on accreditation   days. No out of school or in-school activities besides teaching. No videos, field trips, guest speakers, etc. An annotated schedule for the day. (to be completed the day before the visit)

_____ Provide proof of "other" resources relating to access to books. Nooks, I-pads, Kindles, etc.

For visits other than initial accreditation:

_____ Proof that all deficiencies from your previous visit have been rectified.

_____ Cite actions taken on recommendations/suggestions made by the last visitation team

SCISA Exceptional Learning Schools

Accreditation Internal Review Diagnostic

Standards Development

SCISA is committed to the care and education of all students within our association. In that regard, SCISA employs a research and performance-based protocol for all schools that commits to the care, education, learning, growth and development of all students.   SCISA holds its accredited schools accountable to high quality educational standards and results supported by an engagement of continuous improvement.

SCISA Standards for Quality Schools

The SCISA Standards for Quality Schools provide the foundation for the SCISA Accreditation Process. The Standards also represent the continued evolution of accreditation as a powerful tool for driving effective practices in support of young children. The SCISA Standards for Quality Schools are comprised of Standards, Indicators and Criteria. The Standards are research-based, comprehensive quality statements that describe conditions that are necessary for schools to achieve organizational effectiveness and ensure student learning and grow. These Standards support an education process that is truly visionary; characterizing how schools should operate to promote a culture of continuous learning that is fluid – engaging leaders, staff and parents. The Indicators are operational definitions or descriptions of exemplary practices and processes, together providing a comprehensive picture of each Standard. The Indicators should be scored individually by school officials through a set of Criteria. These Criteria contain rich, detailed descriptors of what each Indicator looks like in practice. The performance of each school will be rated on each Criteria on a 4 point Likert Scale based on evidence.

Key Educational Concepts in Standards

1. All schools commit to rigor, equity, student engagement and depth and application of knowledge.

2. All schools commit to developmentally appropriate cognitive, emotional, social, creative, and physical growth and development, as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching, learning, development and care for young children.

3. The school improvement plan requires identification of goals for improvement of achievement and instruction.

4. The governing body operates consistent with established roles and responsibilities; must be ethical and free of conflict of interest.

5. Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities.

6. All schools have formal structures whereby each student is well known.

7. Curriculum, instruction and assessment are adjusted in response to data about young children's readiness for the next level.

8. Professional and support staff members are trained in evaluation, interpretation and use of data.

9. Schools must demonstrate, using data, growth in student learning, student readiness for the next level and student success at the next level.

Standards for the Future

Through our own commitment to improvement, SCISA revises its Standards to ensure that they remain relevant and current as the foundation of the SCISA Accreditation Process. There are very practical reasons to review the Standards – our knowledge of effective practices changes, and research reveals new information about factors that contribute to student achievement and the learning, growth and development of all students.

However, revising the Standards also opens the door to considering future trends in education and SCISA's own research and findings from the institution visits at the nearly 65 accredited schools that we have conducted over the last 5 years. Feedback from the field also provided rich experiences and expertise that allowed us to look at creating Standards for the future, not just today.

This rich and deep revision process produced a set of Standards that will challenge schools to commit to the care and educational well-being of students, to reach higher, to examine closer and to demonstrate the fidelity and integrity of best practices in learning. The Standards for Quality Schools significantly increase the focus on teaching and learning; incorporate 21st Century Skills related to student learning; embed high expectations for professional practice; and focus on developmentally appropriate cognitive, emotional, social, creative, and physical growth and development, as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching, learning, development and care for all students.

Each Indicator has descriptive Criteria, and both schools and the visiting External Review Teams will evaluate the institution against each Indicator, not just the Standards.

SCISA Accreditation Protocols:

Performance-Based Models All SCISA Accreditation Protocols are systematic, systemic and sustainable approaches to improving student performance results over time based on meeting Standards, engaging in continuous improvement and implementing quality assurance. Schools may pursue accreditation as individual schools or as part of a system.

SCISA (School) Accreditation is a researched-based framework that supports the process of accreditation; provides a means to engage in continuous improvement; and involves the entire school community in a continuous process of self-evaluation, reflection and improvement. The process invites external scrutiny and welcomes the constructive feedback of peers. The process demands rigor, is based in data and approaches documentation of results with educational best practices.

SCISA Accreditation is a powerful systems approach to improving learning, growth and development of students as well as organizational effectiveness overtime. SCISA Accreditation recognizes that supporting students in their learning, growth and development is a result of how well all the parts of the education system—the school or corporation system, school and the learning environments —work together to meet the needs of students. SCISA Accreditation is used by school from across South Carolina and Georgia.

Exceptional Learning Schools Accreditation Platform

Language based learning differences including but not limited to: dyslexia processing disorders dysgraphia expressive and or receptive language disorder, executive dysfunction, and dyscalculia.

Assurances
The school has designed a comprehensive program for students with language-based learning differences. These programs include the following assurances:

Assurances:

Assurance 1:   The school admit students who are cognitively capable.

Assurance 2:   The school offers multi-sensory structured literacy instruction. Including the components phonology, sound/symbol mapping, syllable patterns, morphology, syntax, comprehension, and vocabulary.

Assurance 3:   The school has a focus on, self-knowledge, self-advocacy, executive functioning, emotional well-being.

Assurance 4:   The school has a strength-based approach.

Assurance 5:	The school integrates assistive and instructional technology. The program is designed to help students maximize their academic potential.
Assurance 6:	The school serves as a resource to the community in the areas of language-based learning differences.
Assurance 7:	The school is committed to stay abreast of current research in the field of language-based learning differences.

SCISA Exceptional Learning Schools Accreditation Standards

Standards

Standard 1: Mission

    A. Institutional Educational Designation

Standard 2: Governance

    A. Nondiscrimination

    B. Client/Student Records
    C. Research
    D. Instructional Planning

Standard 3: Curriculum

    A. Instructional Methods

Standard 4: Educational Support Services

Standard 5: Education Diagnostic/Evaluation Services

    A. Medication
    B. Behavioral and Affective Practices
    C. Emergency Services
    D. Transitions to Other Environments
    E. Goals and Objectives

Standard 6: Program Evaluation

    A. Data Collection

Evidence Collection and Rationale

Evidence may include:

Samples of materials and lessons for multi-sensory structured literacy instruction.
The integrated technology plan for schools includes assistive technology support for learning.

List how your school address is self-knowledge, self-advocacy, executive functioning skills, social and emotional well-being.

Samples of sharing expertise on language-based learning differences with the community.

Provide a copy of professional development calendar, conferences attended, focusing on research and best practices in the field of language-based learning differences.

Standard 1: Mission

The school has a specific written statement that clearly outlines the organization's mission and purpose. The educational constructs that are communicated within the statement must actively engage all areas of school life and every member of the school's constituency.

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
1.1	The school's purpose statement contains written language that designates the primary mission of the institution is to serve students with learning disabilities.	
1.2	The system commits to a purpose statement that defines beliefs about teaching and learning, including the expectations for learners.	
1.3	The school takes steps to ensure that students and their families understand and support the school's philosophy and mission.	
1.4	The school's philosophy, mission and goals are communicated in publications and manuals and on the school's website.	
1.5	Curriculum and instruction reflect the school's mission and philosophy.	
1.6	The school visibly promotes its identity with symbols and displays that are part of publications and the physical environment of the school.	
1.7	Foundational statements (philosophy, mission, goals) are periodically reviewed and affirmed or revised by school leadership.	
1.8	The school implements measures to assess its effectiveness in fulfilling its mission and goals.	

STANDARD 2: GOVERNANCE

The school operates under a leadership and governance model that is dedicated to the support of an active learning environment, the development growth of children; parental and family involvement, and the effectiveness of the entire school program.

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
2.1	The governance of the school ensures that the school operates legally (complying with applicable local, state and federal laws) as required by its status as an independent school.	
2.2	The governance ensures that the documents required for legal operation are secured and maintained. Required documents include a constitution, by-laws, published non-discriminatory admissions policy, and IRS Form 5578. Articles establishing incorporated status and tax-exempt status are also required for schools. All documents that define and establish the corporate status of the school are on-site and readily available.	
2.3	The role of the governance and the procedures for adopting policies are clearly defined. The governance fulfills its duty and responsibilities in relation to the selection and evaluation of the administrator, long-range planning, legal obligations, major policy oversight, and financial oversight.	
2.4	Criteria for hiring the school's leadership include an assessment of the candidate's understanding of and commitment to the doctrinal statement, philosophy and mission of the school.	
2.5	Governance refrains from undermining the authority of the leadership to conduct the daily operations of the school.	
2.6	Governance and leadership work cooperatively to promote the health of the school and the success of students and teachers.	
2.7	The school has an organizational structure that clearly defines lines of authority.	
2.8	The administrative and faculty turnover is not excessive.	
2.9	The school has an effective administrative organization for carrying out the program of the school and the policies established by the governance. The school has an adequate number of administrative personnel who are qualified by training and experience in the field of administration.	

2.10	The administrative head of the school is accountable to the governance and is responsible for ensuring expected levels of student performance.	
2.11	Leadership ensures that all school programs and activities are adequately planned and supervised.	
2.12	The school defines administrative policies and procedures in a document or manual that is regularly reviewed, updated as needed, and followed in administrative practice.	
2.13	The leadership adheres to ethical guidelines concerning confidentiality of communications.	
2.14	The leadership undertakes strategic planning aimed at accomplishing the school's mission and goals.	
2.15	Leadership ensures that the school abides by legal and ethical business and educational practices.	
2.16	The organization maintains a system of personnel records that includes an annual performance evaluation for each employee.	
2.17	The organization defines in writing its policies and procedures for controlling access to or receipt, use, and release of information about its employees.	
2.18	The organization retains personnel qualified in all respects to staff its program(s) of services.	
2.19	The organization has a staff development program that offer opportunities for staff to improve their knowledge, skill, and abilities.	

Standard 3: Curriculum

Curriculum may be viewed as the framework of an educational program. It ultimately determines what clients/students will learn in the way of skills and competencies. While subject matter, methods, and techniques may vary according to a number of different factors, the delivery of curriculum requires balancing the demands of traditional subject matter and methods with the unique needs of the individual learner.

For early childhood programs, the goal of instruction is to build a foundation for lifelong learning, achievement and assisting each child to reach her/his full potential. Instruction is embedded in the design of learning centers /environments, materials, as well as daily routines and transitions.

Language and literacy development in early childhood builds the foundation for learning across content areas. Transition programs, postsecondary and lifelong adult service models offer direct instruction/training in each area of student/client need moving that student/client to the adult environments of personal living spaces, community and social venues and work/training sites. The goal and intent of all instruction and skills application is to provide knowledge and support skills necessary for student/client success in life.

This success is geared toward an individual's optimal levels of performance and will necessarily require the development and access of appropriate accommodations for that individual.

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.1	The education program has a written, comprehensive curriculum that addresses all of the program's specific areas of instruction or training, as well as mastery goals, objectives, and limits of assessment (minimal standards) in each course of instruction at each grade or developmental level taught including personal, social, behavioral, and career independence where appropriate.	
3.2	The curriculum addresses the specific abilities and educational needs of each client/student and promotes individual achievement and independence.	
3.3	Review program description--education program and curriculum document(s)	
3.4	The curriculum used in the educational program is consistent with the program's philosophy and goals.	

3.5	The education program can provide evidence of unbiased, non-discriminatory curricula.	
3.6	The instructional activities are consistent with learning goals and objectives and the needs of the population(s) being served.	
3.7	Provisions are made for modifying materials and instruction to meet the needs of individual clients/students.	
3.8	The curriculum and instruction are modified as necessary to remain congruent with needs defined by the formal individual client/student plan (e.g., IEP, IFSP, Individual Service Plan, Individual Treatment Plan, etc.).	
3.9	Review curriculum document(s), interview appropriate member(s) of staff and governing body.	
3.10	The curriculum is designed to assist each client/student to develop relevant attitudes, knowledge, and skills appropriate to his/her individual interests, abilities, and needs. The curriculum addresses the following areas, as appropriate to the population served: ☐ Readiness skills: pre-reading, pre mathematics, pre-writing; ☐ Basic skills in language, reading, writing, spelling, and mathematics; ☐ Perceptual skills/fine motor development: auditory, visual, tactile; ☐ Science and social studies; ☐ Communication skills (receptive and expressive language development and/or augmentative communication devices); ☐ Social/interpersonal skills; ☐ Pre-vocational and vocational skills; ☐ Technology skills; ☐ Self-help and independent living skills; ☐ Positive attitudes toward self and others; ☐ Problem solving skills; ☐ Productive work and study habits; and ☐ Health and physical development (including gross motor development).	
3.11	The curriculum includes instructional activities designed to facilitate positive interaction among all clients/students in the school and encourage clients/students to accept and understand the abilities, needs, and feelings of their peers.	

3.12	Review curriculum document(s), interview appropriate member(s) of staff and governing body, and observe classroom instruction.	
3.13	In programs that enroll high school students, standards-based curriculum options exist within the program to provide the opportunity for those students to accrue credits toward graduation, where appropriate.	
3.14	The program's curriculum and teaching methods facilitate client/student transition to the public school system or to other appropriate educational programs, where indicated by client/student needs.	
3.15	The curriculum provides for a theory/research-based comprehensive program of instruction/training/support designed to address the specific abilities and lifelong learning needs of each client/student to promote optimal individual achievement.	
3.16	The curriculum includes instructional experiences and activities designed to facilitate chronologically age appropriate activities in appropriate, natural environments.	
3.17	The curriculum is designed to address attitudes, knowledge, and skills related to all areas of life management and performance as well as personal enrichment. The curriculum addresses but is not limited to the following areas appropriate to the individual clients/students served: □ Personal living skills/needs; □ Community inclusion including transportation and participation; □ Health and physical wellness needs; □ Sexuality issues and needs; □ Personal management and organization skills/needs; □ Time management skills/needs; □ Social/interpersonal skills/needs; □ Problem solving and self-determination skills/needs; □ Personal enrichment activities and skills (e.g., music, art, hobbies); □ Pre-vocational and vocational skills/needs; □ Job search/placement skills/needs; and □ Job development and maintenance skills/needs.	

Instructional Methods

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.18	Throughout the client's/student's educational experience there is a consistent and positive emphasis on achievement, and the expectation of achievement is shared with clients/students, as appropriate.	
3.19	Review instructor lesson plans; interview clients/students, instructional and administrative staff; observe classroom instruction.	

Utilize Classroom Observation

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.20	When evaluating client/student progress, benchmarks are individualized to promote client/student achievement.	
3.21	Review policy/procedures for assessment; interview clients/students, instructional and administrative staff.	
3.22	In addition to formal testing, assessment methods include informal evaluations, criterion-referenced testing, observations, review of the client /student history, conferences, and where indicated, testing for specific disabilities or developmental delay.	
3.23	Review policy/procedures for assessment; observe classroom instruction; and interview clients/students, instructional and administrative staff.	
3.24	Clients/students are assessed at least two times per year to evaluate progress or more frequently as dictated by local, state, or federal requirements. Those clients/students who are not making the expected progress receive further evaluation that may lead to alternative instructional approaches or therapeutic intervention. If modifications are made, there is documentation of them in the client/student.	
3.25	Instructors match teaching and testing activities to the learning objectives in order to promote optimal achievement	

3.26	Instructors provide for individual differences by adapting instructional methods, assignments, and tests to different learning styles and paces.	
3.27	Modifications are made within the instructional process when either the content of the lesson or method of instruction is inappropriate for the learner.	
3.28	Learning activities include opportunities to use all modalities (visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic), as appropriate to the population being served.	
3.29	The amount of time-on-task that is spent in instructional activities is appropriate to the population being served and in keeping with state regulations where such exist.	
3.30	Review policy/procedure regarding staff development, interview appropriate staff.	
3.31	Staff development is an ongoing, integral, and identifiable part of the organization's program of services.	
3.32	The organization offers orientation and in-service training for new staff with respect to organization objectives, resources, policies, services, and client/student served by the organization.	
3.33	Staff development emphasizes awareness, sensitivity, and appreciation of the culture and perspective of the clients/students served by the organization.	
3.34	Staff development utilizes a variety of training resources, including those available in the surrounding community (e.g., area experts, resources accessible through local colleges and universities, etc.)	
3.35	The education program serves a defined client/student population consistent with its mission and specifies clearly its conditions of eligibility for services.	
3.36	Review policy, procedure, and mission statement regarding population to be served.	

Nondiscrimination

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.30	The education program has a policy of administering its admissions practices and delivery of services to students/clients without regard to age, sex, sexual orientation/preference, race ethnicity, nationality, or disability of the client/student consistent with the mission and identified population of the organization and evidence of consistent application of that policy.	
3.31	The education program and services conform to all applicable federal and state requirements governing the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of client/student information, including the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), where applicable. The manner in which it meets these requirements is described in policy/procedure.	
3.32	With signed releases the education program communicates with other organizations involved in the client's/student's treatment and/or education to maximize the coordination of services provided to him/her.	
3.33	The education program has a policy that states what the exceptions to confidentiality are and requires that those limits be shared with clients/students and their legal guardians, as appropriate, at the time of enrollment.	
3.34	The education program's policies on confidentiality describe clearly the organization's responsibility for disclosure when a client/student is endangered or may be harmful to others.	
3.35	Review policy/procedure regarding confidentiality of client/student records. Interview parents, clients/students, staff.	
3.36	The education program's recording and record-keeping practices and storage facilities have procedural and physical safeguards to prevent unauthorized access to information.	
3.37	Review policy/procedure regarding confidentiality of client/student and observe location of records.	
3.38	The use of audio and/or visual recording methods for any purposes occurs only with full knowledge of the purposes by the client/student or legal guardian and his/her approval.	

Client/Student Records

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.39	The education program maintains a record, either in hardcopy or electronic form, for each client/student enrolled for care or services. The records are clear, concise, legible, and chronologically complete from entrance to exit and: ☐ Document evaluations that identify the specific needs of the client/student; ☐ Reflect client/student strengths and needed program components; ☐ Specify the comprehensive program plan (case plan, Individual Education Program, transition plan) devised to meet identified needs; ☐ Clearly state goals and objectives; ☐ Document the review and modification of the program plan, goals and objectives in consideration of the client's/student's progress; ☐ Document each time the record or parts of it are shared with others; and ☐ Summarize upon exit the client's/student's skills and areas of need with relevant recommendation.	
3.40	Review client/student file(s) and policies/procedures related to student records.	
3.41	The organization has written policies that govern internal dissemination of confidential information, making it available only to those employees with a reasonable need for access.	
3.42	When an organization uses electronic records, safeguards exist to prevent unauthorized access to the records.	

Research

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.43	The education program has written policy/procedures that govern its conducting and reporting of research and conform to all specified federal regulations.	
3.44	Research policy/procedures require approval of all research by an internal or external Institutional Review Board (IRB).	

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.45	For programs servicing clients to whom IDEA does not apply (clients over the age of 21, infant/toddler programs, etc.), while the requirement to write a formal IEP does not apply, for the purpose of NCASES, a comparable service or treatment plan that meets similar criteria should be developed. In the following standards, IEP refers to the overarching plan that establishes goals and objectives for a client in the program.	
3.46	Each special education client/student has an individualized education program.	
3.47	The individualized education program includes: ☐ A statement of the individual's present levels of educational performance; ☐ A statement of annual goals, including short-term Instructional objectives; ☐ A statement of the specific special education and related services to be provided to the client/student and the extent to which the individual will be able to participate in regular educational programs; ☐ The projected dates for initiation of services and the anticipated duration of the services; ☐ Appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining whether the short-term instructional objectives are being achieved; ☐ A transition plan, where appropriate; and ☐ A family service plan, where appropriate.	

3.48	Objectives specified in the individualized education program maximize the individual's potential.	
3.49	All individualized education programs are reviewed and updated on at least an annual basis or more frequently as required by law or regulation.	
3.50	The education program has written policies and procedures for involving parents or guardians in the development and review of individualized education programs in compliance with state and federal requirements.	
3.51	Review policy/procedures regarding development of individualized education plan, IEPs, and minutes of IEP meetings.	

Individualized Service Planning

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.52	The education program plans, provides, and evaluates educational and related services on an individualized basis.	
3.53	Each service within a program is clearly defined in writing.	
3.54	There are clearly defined policies and procedures for referring a client/student, including eligibility criteria, for each service component of the program.	
3.55	Review policy/procedure regarding development of plan for education and related services, meeting minutes, etc., to verify procedures, list of services provided, documents defining sources, and document identifying criteria for involvement in services.	

Instructional Planning

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.56	The education program ensures systematic, effective instructional planning to include at minimum: ☐ Written daily, weekly, monthly, or unit based instructional plans in each curriculum area; ☐ Regular, documented supervision of instructors by school administrator or designee; ☐ Submission, review, and approval of written instructional plans by school administrator or designee; and ☐ Substantive observation and formal classroom observations are conducted and feedback is provided for each instructor at least two times per academic year by school administrator or designee.	
3.57	Instructors maintain day-to-day records of client/student progress in each curriculum area (e.g., anecdotal notes, charts, worksheets, etc.).	
3.58	Instructional objectives are reviewed at least quarterly and updated based on clients'/students' progress and instructional planning is adapted accordingly.	
3.59	A formalized, analytic approach (such as Task Analysis) is utilized to identify the appropriate level and sequence of instruction.	
3.60	Review policy/procedures regarding instructional planning and lesson – unit plans, interview appropriate staff.	

Standard 4: Educational Support Services

Educational support services include a diversity of specialists traditionally called instructional consultants, learning disability instructor consultants, school psychologists, social workers, speech therapists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, curriculum specialists, child study team experts, and physicians (esp. pediatricians, psychiatrists, and/or pediatric neurologists). This list is not designed to be exhaustive but to illustrate the range of specialists who are available and at times required to support special education services.

These standards are designed to ensure that an organization seeking certification that provides such services administers them in a coordinated manner, verifies training, expertise, certification and licensing of experts and holds them accountable for delivery of support services in a manner consistent with organization mission, philosophy, policies and procedures.

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
4.1	The organization has taken reasonable steps to make sure that each specialist in a support services role has: ☐ At least two objective and favorable references prior to performing assigned duties. ☐ A current certificate and/or license, ☐ Regular continuing education and in-service training to stay current with developments/changes in their fields or specialty, and ☐ A clear job description or contract specifying his/her role at the organization and including interdisciplinary cooperation.	
4.2	All specialists employ well-validated procedures for delivering support services and communicate their recommendations clearly (i.e., free of jargon that confuses other staff not trained in their own specialty), orally and in writing to all staff working with clients/students.	
4.3	Where clinical services under the IEP or individual service plan are given to clients/students, documented progress notes are kept and shared, as appropriate, with other staff working with the client/student.	
4.4	Support service personnel are given an orientation to organization policies and procedures and are held accountable for complying with them.	

Standard 5: Education Diagnostic/Evaluation Services

These standards deal with both the use of formal properly validated, replicated, and current (not outdated) assessment instruments that are administered by persons properly trained, proficient, and certified to administer and conduct diagnostic services or interns under their supervision and informal assessments utilized by school professionals. Additionally, these services are to be used to identify strengths in an individual and seek solutions to problems rather than merely to label individuals and/or limit their potential for success.

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
5.1	All educational assessments and related diagnostic evaluations are performed by individuals appropriately educated, trained, and certified (where required) to administer such procedures.	
5.2	All diagnostic instruments used by the organization meet professionally accepted standards of validation and replication and are utilized only in a manner and for purposes consistent with their design. Only evaluation instruments appropriate to the individual's needs, age, and background and to the assessment questions are utilized.	
5.3	All assessment data are carefully recorded using professional standards, and a report is made by a competent professional who interprets the scores so other team members can clearly understand what they mean. The report is filed in the client's/student's permanent record.	
5.4	All evaluation and diagnostic instruments are selected, administered, and interpreted with sensitivity to language and cultural differences.	

Medication

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
5.5	Programs that administer medication do so only with written policies and procedures that are compliant with all applicable jurisdictions.	
5.6	Programs that have clients/students with guardianship or conservatorship over medical decisions have written consent from parents and/or guardians to administer medications.	
5.7	Medications are administered only by individuals qualified by the state to administer medications.	

Behavioral and Affective Practices

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
5.8	The instructor/service provider exhibits professional authority while demonstrating self-confidence as an instructional model.	
5.9	The instructor exercises appropriate visual monitoring and verbal cues to maintain order within the classroom.	
5.10	The behavior supports system employed within the program complies with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and other requirements.	
5.11	The behavior supports system employed within the program is consistent with the philosophy and the goals of the program, allows for flexibility in response to individual client/student needs, and is readily apparent and consistently implemented by all staff.]	
5.12	The standards for acceptable behavior and the consequences of misbehavior are written, taught, and reviewed with the clients/students in detail at the start of the program, and administered effectively throughout the year as appropriate to the population served.	
5.13	Rules and behavior expectations are appropriate to the population served and stated within a positive framework.	

Emergency Services

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
5.14	Safeguards and written procedures for responding to client/student medical and psychiatric emergencies exist and are made known to all staff responsible for the oversight of clients/students.	
5.15	These procedures minimally: ☐ Require that parents/guardians be notified of the emergency as soon as possible; ☐ Identify safety protocols for insuring client/student safety; ☐ Describe access to and utilization of available emergency resources (e.g., local fire and police, community hospital emergency department, on-call medical personnel). ☐ Specify notifications to others responsible for the client's/student's safety (e.g., bus driver, after-school program staff); and ☐ Require comprehensive documentation of the medical or psychiatric emergency to minimally include known precipitants, description of the emergency, attempts to resolve the emergency and their effectiveness, any sequelae to the event; and all notifications.	
5.16	Policies and procedures for responding to medical and psychiatric emergencies are followed.	

Transition to Other Environments

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
5.17	The education program has a policy of promoting transition to the most appropriate functional environment.	
5.18	The possibility of transition to a more appropriate functional environment is evaluated at least annually, as evidenced by a notation of a supervisory meeting or progress report, if appropriate to the population being served. Evaluation of appropriate environment is made by the transdisciplinary team, which includes student and family, and the decision is based on quantitative and qualitative information.	

5.19	There is a written statement regarding admission and assessment that includes a checklist of activities to be completed, responsibilities of personnel, timelines, and procedures to be followed.	
5.20	When clients/students are admitted to the organization for residential placement, the residential and educational program staff members participate jointly in the intake process.	
5.21	There is a checklist of necessary records to be obtained for each client/student, reflecting criteria for admission to the organization and for appropriate placement within the program.	

Standard 6: Program Evaluation

The routine measurement of outcomes is a critical process in evaluating the quality of services and identifying opportunities for improvement in it. Ideally, such an evaluation process should compare the organization's current performance against its own goals and past performance, as well as against regional and national benchmarks, where such exist. It is also important to consider internal data pools comparing current client/student outcomes to former client/student outcomes.

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
6.1	The organization conducts, in accordance with a written plan, an ongoing evaluation of its program of services, minimally attempting to evaluate the outcomes of the services it provides, and the organization participates in a state or national outcomes study.	
6.2	The organization's program of services is regularly evaluated by the board and administrative staff to determine the need for the organization's services and its ability to meet its own and the community's expectations with respect to outcomes.	
6.3	The organization defines and systematically obtains the information it needs to evaluate its program of services.	
6.4	The organization sets goals and objectives for its program of services that are consistent with the needs of its clients/students and its commitment to the community.	

6.5	Written goals and objectives are established for the 1) quality of the services available to clients/students and 2) benefits or outcomes to be achieved by clients/students who use them.	
6.6	Objectives are measurable and directly related to goals.	