



Frequently-Asked-Questions about Accreditation

What is accreditation?

Accreditation is a voluntary activity initiated by the institution that requires a rigorous self-evaluation by all key stakeholders as well as an independent, objective appraisal of the overall educational quality by peers. Accreditation emphasizes quality assurance and a commitment to continuous quality enhancement. Additionally, accreditation is sought by Christian schools in order to validate their quality and verify that they are striving for excellence based on a solid Christian philosophy of education foundation.

Why is accreditation important?

- It documents that the school is true to its own foundational statements (mission, vision, core values, goals)
- It affirms that the school meets standards of quality established by the international school community
- It provides validation of the credibility of the school through a peer review process
- It promotes accountability to the school community
- It improves instruction targeting increased student achievement
- It promotes ongoing instructional improvement through a continuous process of self-assessment and systematic school development
- It encourages the evaluation of biblical and spiritual integration of the school
- It transfers credits between schools and between nation's school systems

Who accredits Grove Christian School?

ACSI, the **Association for Christian Schools International**, provides a highly regarded accreditation program for our secondary (6-12), elementary (K-5), and preschool programs. Grove Christian School also has AdvancedEd eligibility for joint accreditation status with SACS, the **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools**. SACS is the organization that also accredits high schools, colleges and universities in the southern region of the United States, including Virginia.

What are the standards for accreditation?

There are eight standards with several substandards associated that provide the benchmark for assessment for the accreditation process.

- 1 - Philosophy and Foundations
- 2 - Governance and Executive Leadership
- 3 - Home and Community Relations and Student Services
- 4 - Personnel
- 5 - Instructional Programs and Resources
- 6 - Student Care
- 7 - Character, Values, and Spiritual Formation of Students
- 8 - Continuous School Improvement Plan

What is the current accreditation status of Grove Christian School?

The Virginia Council for Private Education recognizes that Grove Christian School is accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International and AdvancED and is recognized as fully accredited by the Virginia Council for Private Education as authorized by the Virginia Board of Education through September 30, 2017.

During the 2016-17 school year, Grove Christian School is conducting the necessary regularly-scheduled self-study for continued accreditation (re-accreditation) through ACSI and AdvancED. The accreditation process will be finalized and renewed by May 30 of 2017. Another self-study and continued re-accreditation cycle would then occur in the school year 2021-22.

What distinguishes ACSI as an accrediting agency?

The ACSI accreditation protocol is unique in two major ways: (1) the protocol probes the spiritual aspects of each component of the organization and (2) the protocol addresses the educational quality and integrity of the organization. The latter addresses the issues demonstrating that the school is true to its own statements of philosophy, mission, and goals and that it is meeting the standards of quality and effectiveness.

How does this accreditation process connect to strategic planning?

As a result of the accreditation process, the school establishes a continuous school improvement plan (Standard 8) against which the school will report annually. The continuous school improvement plan should be a large part of a school's strategic plan, although a larger strategic plan may encompass goals that are not part of the accreditation process.

The results of the reaccreditation process will be published in June of 2017 along with a 5-year strategic plan for Grove Christian School.