

## CSI ACCREDITATION PROCESS AT-A-GLANCE

### PHASE 1

#### SCHOOL APPLIES FOR CSI ACCREDITATION CANDIDACY

- *Vision to Action* information sent to the school
- CSI visits the school to verify readiness.
- CSI Accreditation assigns a mentor
- Candidacy status granted for up to 3 years (5 for new schools)

### PHASE 2

#### SCHOOL CONDUCTS A SELF-EVALUATION

- Led by school steering committee
- Committees gather documentation and write reports
- Complete self-study sent to CSI Accreditation and site visitors

### PHASE 3

#### SITE TEAM VISITS THE SCHOOL (by end of third year of candidacy)

- Team of visiting educators validates self-evaluation
- Site visitors write a report that is submitted to CSI and school
- Team recommends approval of accreditation

#### CSI ACCREDITATION COMMISSION GRANTS ACCREDITATION STATUS

### PHASE 4

#### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP) WRITTEN BY SCHOOL

- Based on concerns noted by the site visit team and in the school's own self study
- Written by the school improvement team
- Submitted to CSI Accreditation

#### CSI ACCREDITATION COMMISSION APPROVES THE SIP

**ANNUAL REPORTS SUBMITTED TO CSI ACCREDITATION FOR THE  
DURATION OF THE ACCREDITATION TERM (MAX 5 YEARS)**

## Accreditation Phases

- 1 Phase One:** The school applies for accreditation candidacy status, the *Vision to Action* process binder is sent to the school, a CSI representative visits the school, and a member of CSI Accreditation's staff contacts the school to begin the process. CSI Accreditation will assign a mentor to the school who will advise the school throughout the entire accreditation process.
- 2 Phase Two:** The school completes a self-evaluation using CSI Accreditation's *Vision to Action*. This self-evaluation process, led by a steering committee, is completed by staff members, school board members, selected parents, and selected constituents. The school site visit will be scheduled when the self study is complete. All essential standards will have been met, and all standards will have a rating of 3 or better.
- 3 Phase Three:** A team of objective observers with educational backgrounds visits the school to validate the self-evaluation and makes recommendations for improvement. This site team makes a recommendation for accreditation to CSI Accreditation. The completion of the self-evaluation and the site visit should occur within six months of each other, and preferably within the same school year.
- 4 Phase Four:** The school develops a School Improvement Plan (SIP), based upon the school's self-evaluation and the site visit team's report, and submits it to CSI Accreditation. Notification of accreditation status will be made to the school. Annually, during the term of their accreditation, the school reports progress made toward meeting the goals of the School Improvement Plan. During the final year the school reapplies for accreditation.

### Phase 1 – Preparation (Duration: 0-3 years)

1. The CSI member school contacts CSI Accreditation (800-635-8288, ext. 234) to request an application for candidacy. Only CSI member schools can receive CSI Accreditation.
2. The school submits the application form along with the application fee. This fee covers the cost of the *Vision to Action* binder (standards and procedures), initial consultation with CSI Accreditation, and the assigning of a mentor. This fee is non-refundable. A CSI representative visits the school to provide further data for the application.
3. CSI Accreditation mails a copy of *Vision to Action* (standards and procedures) to the school.
4. If the application is accepted, schools in their first cycle of accreditation are now considered candidates for accreditation. A school can retain candidacy status for three years. Phases Two and Three must be accomplished no later than year three of candidacy. Schools that are less than three years old at the time they apply for candidacy may take five years (see Accreditation Categories).

5. CSI Accreditation contacts the school and assigns a mentor (see CSI Accreditation Mentors). The mentor will provide advice for the school through Phase Four. Usually the mentor will also serve as the chair of the site visit team.
6. The school contacts the assigned mentor when it is ready to proceed to Phase 2.

## **Phase 2 – Examination (Duration: 1-3 years)**

The school forms an internal steering committee that guides the accreditation process from beginning to end, and include members of the staff and board as well as other stakeholders such as parents and pastors. The board and administration should choose the chair of the steering committee. The steering committee performs the following duties:

- a. Becomes familiar with the accreditation process.
- b. Completes the philosophy and mission subcategory of Standard Category 1. This will act as a model for the other committees, but more importantly the other committees must have the school's philosophy statement and mission statement firmly in mind to do their evaluations of the other aspects of the school.
- c. Forms the committees that will write the self-evaluation for each of the sub-categories of the standards of *Vision to Action*. In smaller schools it will be best for the steering committee to assign an entire category of standards to each committee. The committees should be composed of school board members, staff members, and selected parents and other constituents.
- d. Communicates to the chairs of each committee how information should be or can be gathered (surveys, interviews, documentation) and how the report should be written and formatted.
- e. Writes a calendar for the process.
- f. Keeps the entire school community informed of the self-evaluation and accreditation process including rationale and progress.
- g. Determines the composition of the site visit team in conjunction with the assigned CSI Accreditation mentor.
- h. Schedules the site visit with the assigned CSI Accreditation mentor.

The assigned mentor visits the school as the process is beginning, and meets with the steering committee, the administrator, and the board to explain the process of accreditation and to give guidance for next steps. The mentor should also visit the school approximately half way through the process to give guidance to the team and answer any questions. The school pays for the expenses of both visits.

The self-evaluation committees complete their work including rating the school on each standard assigned to them, describing each rating, and identifying blessings and recommendations related to their assignments.

The steering committee edits all work of the other committees so all categories and sub-categories are written in the same format. The steering committee also makes sure all documentation is gathered. All reports and supporting documents are placed into three-ring binders. Additional documentation is prepared for the site visitors.

Once the entire self-evaluation report is completed, all members of all committees read through the self-evaluation for suggested editing.

### **Phase 3 – Validation (Duration: 3-6 months)**

1. Site visitors are chosen by the administration, steering committee, and the assigned CSI Accreditation mentor. The school administration contacts the site team to request their participation and provides necessary details for the visit. The CSI Accreditation mentor will usually chair the site visit team (see Recommendations for Site Visits, Team Size and Composition).
2. The school sends a copy of the school's self-study to the site visitors at least one month in advance of the visit.
3. Site visitors observe the school and write their report during a two-day or three-day site visit (see Suggested Site Visit Schedules). The school pays all expenses of the site visitors—travel, food, lodging, and substitute expenses of site visitors (see Summary of Fees and Costs).
4. The site team makes a recommendation regarding accreditation.
5. The site visit chair submits the report with the recommendation for accreditation to CSI Accreditation. A copy is also sent to the school's governing body and administration.
6. A committee designated by CSI Accreditation reads the site visit team's report and makes a ruling for or against accreditation (see CSI Accreditation Commission and Reviewing Committees). After the site visit team reports are read, accreditation status is conferred by the CSI Accreditation Commission, and schools are informed and sent certificates following the Commission's decision.

### **Phase 4 – Accreditation and Continuation (up to 5 years)**

1. Based upon the self-evaluation and the site visit recommendations a School Improvement Plan (SIP) is written by a school improvement team (see The School's Improvement Process after Accreditation).
2. The school improvement team presents the School Improvement Plan to the school board and to the staff. A summary of this plan should be publicized to the school community.
3. The School Improvement Plan is submitted to CSI Accreditation by April 15 in the calendar year after the site visit.
4. Each April, during the term of accreditation, a school improvement team submits to CSI Accreditation a report that shows progress toward meeting the goals of the School Improvement Plan. These reports will be read by a committee at CSI headquarters (see Sample Annual Report Form and CSI Accreditation Commission and Review Committees).
5. CSI Accreditation will send certificates of accreditation annually to all accredited schools.
6. Schools that are not approved for annual accreditation will be informed by mail of the reason(s) for denial and given 60 days to rectify the concern(s). Schools that do not provide the required annual documentation or do not provide evidence of working toward improvement will not be granted annual accreditation and their CSI accreditation will be withdrawn (see Appeals Process).
7. Prior to the final year of a school's accreditation term, the school must apply for renewal of accreditation. CSI accreditation will be withdrawn if schools do not successfully renew their accreditation by the end of their accreditation term.