

Section 2227. Recognized Accrediting Agencies

(a) The Board shall recognize accrediting agencies that meet the following requirements:

1. operate continuously for at least five years before applying for recognition under this section.

The Association of Seventh-day Adventist Colleges and Secondary Schools formed with its executive arm, the Board of Regents, to accredit Adventist schools in the Autumn of 1928 and was renamed the Adventist Accreditation Association in 1997.

<https://www.adventistaccreditingassociation.org>

2. maintain membership in a peer organization that supports accrediting agencies in continuous improvement and alignment with best practices in school accreditation.

The Adventist Accreditation Association (AAA) is a founding National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA) member. NCPSA regularly reviews its member organizations in a peer review process. https://ncpsa.org/about_us/

3. use a peer review process that includes evaluation by leaders of similar school types;

The Adventist Accrediting Association (AAA) is the denominational accrediting authority for all educational institutions (PK-12, higher education & graduate studies) operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It fosters close cooperation among the Adventist system's academic institutions and effective working relationships with other educational organizations or institutions, accrediting agencies, and government education departments.

The AAA provides a process by which the educational community holds an institution accountable for its objectives. It assures the church and constituency that an accredited Adventist educational institution offers quality programs to the church youth and provides professional personnel who meet both church and national/provincial standards. This process ensures a basis for reciprocity among Adventist schools. After the school goes through the self-evaluation, a visiting team is gathered with members representing teachers, school administrators, superintendents, and Union education members from similar schools who review and participate in the on-site visit.

The Standards for Accreditation of Seventh-day Adventist Schools are the basis for continuous school improvement evaluation and accreditation of all educational institutions in the North American Division.

More detailed information can be found starting on page 7 of this document:

<https://nad-bigtincan.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/leadership%20resources/administration>

[/administrator's%20filing%20cabinet/evaluation%20instruments/Standards-for-Accreditation.pdf](#)

4. appropriately train all staff and peer reviewers involved in the accreditation process.

All members are regularly trained at the school, conference, and union through meetings and in-services a minimum of three times a year. During the preparation period for the self-study, specific training and orientation are provided in at least three to four sessions. Walkthrough instruction is also done through recorded videos within the accreditation tool on Accreditrac <https://nad2.accreditrac.com/login.php>. Documents and examples are also provided on our online training platform <https://www.adventistlearningcommunity.com>.

5. accredit schools based on publicly accessible documented standards, including mission, governance, finance, program, community of the school, administration, development, admissions, personnel, general health and safety, child and student protection and well-being, facilities, student services, school culture, and residential life (as applicable);

Standards for Accreditation of Seventh-day Adventist Schools have been established for the four domains: Purpose, Plan, Practice, and Product. These domains identify the Core of Adventist Education (see page VI) and align with A Journey to Excellence and The Core of Adventist Education Curriculum. The Standards offer a shared vision of Seventh-day Adventist education, but to make the vision real, the details must be constructed uniquely and personally within communities of learners. Thus, quality educational programs may look very different from one another. In the same way, good educational programs should find many pathways to help our learners meet high standards so that they can effectively achieve academic success and become effective witnesses of the church's mission.

I: PURPOSE

NINE STANDARDS

Standard 1: Philosophy and Mission—The philosophy, mission, and Vision statements are learner-centered and give direction.

The school's programs are developed and approved cooperatively by the administration, staff, and school board and reflect the Seventh-day Adventist worldview, core values, and educational philosophy.

II: PLAN

Standard 2: Curriculum—The curriculum is the core of the educational program, providing for the spiritual, mental, physical, social, and emotional development of learners and preparing them for this world and eternity.

Standard 3: Instruction—The instructional program is aligned with curriculum design and assessment practices, provides for a variety of learning experiences consistent with the school's philosophy, goals, and standards, and actively engages learners in learning.

Standard 4: Assessment—Assessment data informs changes in curriculum and instruction to support learning.

III: PRACTICE

Standard 5: Sustainable Leadership—The Administration and school board ensure the effective and successful operation of the school to promote learner success and well-being.

Standard 6: School Environment—The school environment is designed and maintained to promote learner learning and support the school’s mission and goals.

Standard 7: Professional Learning—Administration and faculty collaborate to develop and implement professional learning opportunities that meet the needs of each learner and enhance the ongoing growth and development of school personnel.

Standard 8: Communication and Collaboration—Communication Collaboration among the school, constituency, and community are essential to providing an effective educational program for learners.

IV: PRODUCT

Standard 9: School Improvement—The accreditation process assists a school in appraising the total program to determine the level to which the purposes and functions outlined in its statement of philosophy and goals for learner learning are accomplished. It also provides the basis for action plans to address areas needing improvement.

More detailed information can be found starting on page 9 of this document:

<https://nad-bigtincan.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/leadership%20resources/administration/administrator's%20filing%20cabinet/evaluation%20instruments/Standards-for-Accreditation.pdf>

6. perform a comprehensive onsite visit of any school seeking accreditation while such school is in session;

The success of the evaluation process depends upon the cooperative efforts of all school stakeholders. The primary responsibility of the Visiting Team is to verify and validate the self-assessment work that the school has completed. A visiting team holds a review onsite.

More detailed information can be found starting on page 14-20 of this document:

<https://nad-bigtincan.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/leadership%20resources/administration/administrator's%20filing%20cabinet/evaluation%20instruments/Standards-for-Accreditation.pdf>

7. require that schools seeking accreditation maintain a curriculum that is informed by research, document individual student progress, and have mechanisms for monitoring, assessing, and providing feedback on student progress;

AAA self-study and visiting team review each PK-12 school's curriculum using the following indicators under curriculum standard 2.

Indicator 2: NAD Adventist education standards serve as the framework for the curriculum, which is inclusive of the following subject areas:

- a. Bible**
- b. English Language Arts**
- c. Mathematics**
- d. Science**
- e. Social Studies**
- f. Health**
- g. Physical Education**
- h. Visual and Performing Arts**
- i. Modern/World Languages**
- j. Technology**

Indicator 3: Curriculum and instruction are organized, reviewed, and revised based on assessment data using tools such as mapping.

Indicator 4: The school-wide curriculum promotes students' inquiry skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, reasoning, and research.

Indicator 5: The school-wide curriculum promotes the development of student attitudes and habits such as persistence, managing impulsivity, respect for diversity, social skills, and responsibility.

Indicator 8: The school-wide curriculum considers students' development, ages, cultures, abilities, interests, and needs.

8. require that schools seeking accreditation promote an equitable, just, and inclusive community of adults and students, foster a culture of learning and inspire students to respect and value diversity in its many forms;

Standard 6 in the self-study deals with this area in the following supporting indicators.

Standard 6: Standard for School Environment (Learning Climate, School Facilities, Health and Safety, and Information Resources and Technology Integration.) The school environment is designed and maintained to promote student learning and to support the school's mission and goals.

Indicator 1: School-wide rules and procedures for behavior are clearly communicated to parents, students, and personnel.

Indicator 2: School personnel create a positive, safe, nurturing, and welcoming school environment that supports student learning and fosters appreciation for diversity.

Indicator 3: The learning climate promotes student core values such as self-discipline, responsibility, positive attitudes, and habits.

Indicator 4: School personnel are sensitive to students' non-academic needs. A process is in place to develop respectful relationships with students and address their spiritual, physical, emotional, and social needs.

Indicator 10: The administration and school board use resources to ensure a safe, healthy environment (including internet safety), with adequate supervision, that supports student learning.

9. conduct ongoing and periodic reviews as necessary throughout the accreditation cycle of the schools that it accredits and provides interim reports during the accredited school's approval the period that is sufficient to meet the informational needs of the Board;

Adventist Accrediting Association's (AAA) accreditation process is an ongoing six-year cycle of quality whereby the school demonstrates the capacity, commitment, and competence to support high-quality student learning and continuous school improvement within the context of the Adventist Worldview. Every school must send a status report once a year and participate in a site review at least once in person by AAA at the mid-cycle or a maximum of four. Visits from the superintendent and Union Education Directors' office are done throughout the period of accreditation.

More detailed information can be found starting on pages 21-23 of this document:

<https://nad-bigtincan.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/leadership%20resources/administration/administrator's%20filing%20cabinet/evaluation%20instruments/Standards-for-Accreditation.pdf>

10. demonstrate substantial understanding and familiarity with state laws, policies, and regulations that apply to approved independent schools in Vermont and

AAA works with the local conference—in this case, the Northern New England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Mark Bugbee Education Superintendent mbugbee@nnec.org, and the Atlantic Union Office of Education <https://atlantic-union.org/ministries/education/>—to stay updated on Vermont laws, policies, and regulations that apply to independent schools in Vermont.

AAA is a member of many state private school associations and sends representatives to these meetings. If Vermont invited us, it would be our pleasure to participate.

11. agree to review and share with the Agency of Education evidence of practices and compliance with state-specific requirements during the initial or interim stages of an approved independent school's accreditation period.

AAA, along with the Atlantic Union and Northern New England Conference, agrees to review and answer any questions the Vermont Agency of Education requests.

(b) Any accrediting agency seeking to be recognized by the Board under this section shall submit a letter and supporting evidence to the Board detailing how it meets each criterion. Each applicant shall also provide its methodology for assessing and supporting schools in meeting and advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and other nondiscriminatory practices. Upon review of each submission, the Board shall determine whether it will recognize the accrediting agency and set the length of time that such recognition will be in effect. The Board may impose additional conditions upon a recognized accrediting agency as it deems appropriate. Applicants shall be notified of a decision and any conditions of continued recognition in writing

We believe that all people are created equal in God's image and that emulating Jesus Christ's ministry of reconciliation necessitates rejecting racism and discrimination. The Adventist Accreditation Association has a global presence and is committed to fostering acceptance, love, and respect for all individuals.

Furthermore, AAA is guided by the Seventh-day Adventist church's Fundamental Belief No. 13, which proclaims the equality of all people in Christ, irrespective of race, culture, learning, nationality, social standing, or gender. This belief mandates service and fellowship without any form of partiality or reservation. Standard Six indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, and 10 directly deal with diversity, equity, and inclusion and are directly referenced above in question 8.