

**International Christian Accrediting Association**

**Accreditation Readiness Diagnostic**

***for* Schools**



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*July 2022*

## Introduction

The ICAA accreditation process is founded upon the biblical principle of the necessity of external witnesses to ascertain and validate one’s credibility (John 5:31; Acts 2:22; 2 Corinthians 13:16). Built upon this foundational principle, ICAA has developed an accreditation process that has several steps to provide for a firsthand witness and validation of a school’s credibility. It is important to note that ICAA accreditation is much more a process than it is a result. While to achieve accreditation, a school must demonstrate that it has achieved and continues to maintain required levels of quality in its programs, operations, and practices, the process of achieving accreditation will inspire and impel the school to continually grow and mature as it becomes the school God has called it to be. The focus and thrust of ICAA accreditation, then, is on an on-going, never-ending process of improvement.

A major component of the ICAA accreditation process is the requirement that schools must engage in guided, thoughtful self-reflection that is thorough and comprehensive. Completion of the Accreditation Readiness Diagnostic is the initial requirement you must complete as you begin the accreditation process. In addition, completion of this activity will help you and others to determine if your institution has the capacity to pursue and achieve ICAA accreditation. Completion of the *Accreditation Readiness Diagnostic* also provides an initial framework which can guide the school as it conducts its comprehensive Self-Assessment as it works to complete the Internal Review process.

## Definition of School Profile

The School Profile and Executive Institutional Summary section is a series of questions designed to elicit demographic and other general information about the school. The School Profile and Executive Institutional Summary is designed to provide stakeholders and others a basic profile of the school and an extended narrative giving an overview of the school and its community and to provide the school an opportunity for a school to tell its story.

## Definition of the Assurances

The ICAA Assurances are statements of practices that are foundational to establishing and maintaining the unique Christian identity and culture of a Christian school, as well as practices that are foundational to legal operations, establishing and maintaining stability, financial accountability, safety, and a focus on school improvement.

## Definition of Domains, Standards, and Performance Levels

The ICAA Domains are statements that define the capacity of a school to provide quality and meet the rigorous demands of continuous improvement. The four Domains are: Cultural Context Domain, Leadership Capacity Domain, Learning Domain, and Resource Capacity Domain. In addition, if the school has an early learning program below 5-year old Kindergarten, there will be a fifth Early Learning Capacity Domain. Each Domain is further defined by Standards, which, in turn, are defined by four-level Performance Rubrics. The school’s performance for each Standard will be rated on a scale of one to four.

## **Strengths and Improvement Opportunities Narratives**

At the end of each of the Domain section, there are two narrative sections that allow you to expand upon and provide rationale for the scores you selected for each Standard. In these sections, you can describe your institution’s strengths as they relate to the respective overall Domain as well as opportunities for improvement for that Domain.

## Student Performance

Briefly describe how well your students perform on assessments you typically administer at your institution. This does not have to be a complete statistical analysis, simply a brief narrative description. If possible, give examples of awards and/or milestones your institution has garnered (Blue Ribbon or similar recognition from states or other organizations, National Merit Scholars, community service awards, spiritual growth, etc.).

## Stakeholder Perceptions

Perceptions held by stakeholders is critical to school success, growth, and improvement. For this reason, institutions are asked to report how their internal and external stakeholders rate the quality of the institution. If you have administered some type of stakeholder survey, provide a brief review of the results. If you have not administered formal surveys, write a brief synopsis of comments, complaints, or testimonials you have from stakeholders.

## **Directions for Completing the Report**

In order to complete the *Accreditation Readiness Diagnostic*, consider the following steps:

1. Download and thoroughly read the *ICAA Self-Assessment Guide for Schools* (including Assurances, Domains, Standards, and performance levels).
2. In this document, complete the School Profile and Executive Institutional Summary.
3. Read each Assurance and answer “yes” or “no” as appropriate for that Assurance.
4. Score each Standard on a scale of 1 (we do not meet this Standard very well) to 4 (we fully meet this Standard) that most accurately reflects the status of your school.
5. Write a brief response about strengths and opportunities for improvement for each standard. Be concise in your answers, focusing on quality and depth over quantity.
6. After completing ratings of all Standards, respond to the prompts for student performance and stakeholder perceptions.
7. After you have completed the report, email a copy to your ICAA Chairperson and the ICAA offices.

**School Profile and Executive Institutional Summary**

School Name       Contact Information

School Address       Head of School Name

City       State/Province       School Phone

Country       Postal Code       School Email

Website

Enrollment       School Setting

Grades       Governance

School Type (check all that apply)  Preschool Religious Denomination

Elementary

Middle School Year School Was Founded

High School

***Describe the community school’s size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?***

***Provide the school’s purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values/beliefs, etc. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.***

***Describe the school’s notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.***

***Provide any additional information that you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.***

**Assurances**

*Read and review each Assurance below carefully, check either “yes” or “no” for each assurance based on your perception of whether your institution meets the accreditation requirement.*

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| Yes | No |
| 1 | | ***Statement of Faith***  The school has a written *Statement of Faith* that does not conflict with the ORUEF Statement of Faith and that is sufficient to establish evangelical doctrine and guide spiritual growth appropriate to the school’s various age/grade levels. |  |  |
| 2 | | ***Testimony of Faith – School Governing Authorities, School Personnel***  All members of the governing body of the school (e.g. board, director, owner, etc.) and all school personnel (administration, faculty, and support personnel) affirm that they are born-again and supportive of the Statement of Faith, Vision/Mission and Christian philosophy of education espoused by the school. |  |  |
| 3 | | ***Spiritual Growth – School Personnel***  All school administrators, faculty, and staff engage in a continuous program of spiritual growth. |  |  |
| 4 | | ***Bible/Religious Instruction – Courses***  All full-time students are required to take Bible/religious courses each year they are enrolled in the school. |  |  |
| 5 | | ***Legal Operations***  The school has developed and maintained required documents and fulfilled all requirements necessary for its legal operations and services as determined by federal, state and local regulations (A partial list of legal considerations is found in the Appendix.). |  |  |
| 6 | | ***Discontinuance Plan***  The school has submitted to the ICAA office a current discontinuance plan that specifies the repository of student, employee and other school records in the event the school closes. The plan includes the name(s) and contact information of the entity and/or person(s) in possession of the records. |  |  |
| 7 | | ***Financial***  The school monitors all financial transactions through a recognized accounting system that is regularly reviewed/audited by an external financial reviewer/auditor. |  |  |
| 8 | | ***School Improvement***  The school engages in a continuous improvement process and implements a *school improvement plan.* |  |  |
| 9 | | ***Security/Safety***  The school implements a written security and crisis management plan that includes emergency evacuation procedures and appropriate training for *stakeholders.* |  |  |
| 10 | | ***Substantive Change***  The school has reported (or is reporting in attached documents) all substantive changes in the institution that affect the scope and/or have an impact on the institution’s ability to meet the ICAA Assurances and ICAA Standards since the last External Review visit. Such changes include but are not limited to:   * Restructuring (merging, opening, or closing) of the institution or institution(s) within its jurisdiction * Mission and purpose of the institution * Governance structure of the institution, including changing from a church-sponsored school to an independent school or vice-versa, or other change in ownership * Grade levels being served by the institution * Significant changes in staffing, including administrative and other nonteaching professional personnel * Available facilities, including upkeep and maintenance * Level of funding * School day or school year * Establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus * Student population that causes significant program or staffing modification(s)   Available programs, including fine arts, practical arts, and student activities |  |  |
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# Cultural Context Domain

Establishing and maintaining a cultural context that is founded upon a strong Christian identity and culture is essential for a Christian school delivers a quality education that is faith-based and into which the Christian faith is integrated into all of learning and embedded in all the school’s programs, practices, and operations. A Christian school’s cultural context includes development of faith-based foundational documents that provide foundational guidance to the school with regard to the school’s purpose/mission and inform the school’s development of both academic and spiritual goals for students, communication of the school’s faith-based emphasis and goals to all school stakeholders, effective integration of a Biblical worldview and Biblical content/principles into the school’s academic and other programs and practices, and the development of assessments of the school’s spiritual formation programs and other faith-based efforts.

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| *Read and review each Standard below carefully, then record a score from 1 to 4 (using the scale described in the instructions) for each Standrad based on your perception of your institution’s readiness to pursue accreditation.* | | **Score** |
| CC1.1 | ***Vision, Mission/Purpose***  The school’s visionand/or mission/purpose statement communicates a purpose and direction for the school, provides foundational guidance to the school in maintaining its Christian identity and culture and commits the school to set high expectations for student success. |  |
| CC1.2 | ***Christian Philosophy of Education, Statement of Faith and Student Spiritual Formation Goals***  The school has developed a Statement of Faith and a Christian philosophy of education that inform the development of student spiritual formation goals, which are reviewed in light of current research and communicated to stakeholders |  |
| CC1.3 | ***Curricular, Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular Integration and Alignment***  The school ensures that all curricula (including any provided by alternative delivery methods and sources), co- and extra-curricular programs and Bible/religious instruction integrate a biblical worldview and are aligned with the school’s vision, mission and student spiritual formation goals. |  |
| CC1.4 | ***Assessment of Student Spiritual Formation***  The school regularly assesses student spiritual formation and utilizes the data to improve the school’s student spiritual formation programs. |  |
| CC1.5 | ***Personnel Performance and Professional Development***  The components of the foundational documents (vision, mission/purpose, Christian philosophy of education, Statement of Faith) are evident in school personnel performance and professional development activities. |  |
| CC1.6 | ***Operations and Support Services***  The school’s operations and support services are informed by a Biblical worldview, are consistent with the school’s foundational documents and are aligned with student spiritual formation goals. |  |

**Cultural Context Domain Narratives**

What were the areas of strength you noted? [focus on Standard scores of 4 or 3]. What actions are you implementing to sustain the areas of strength?

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What were areas in need of improvement? [focus on Standard scores of 2 or 1]. What plans are you making to improve the areas of need?

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# Leadership Capacity Domain

The capacity of leadership to ensure an institution’s progress toward its stated objectives is an essential element of organizational effectiveness. An institution’s leadership capacity includes the fidelity and commitment to its purpose and direction, the effectiveness of governance and leadership to enable the institution to realize its stated objectives, the ability to engage and involve stakeholders in meaningful and productive ways, and the capacity to implement strategies that improve learner and educator performance.

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| *Read and review each Standard below carefully, then record a score from 1 to 4 (using the scale described in the instructions) for each Standard based on your perception of your institution’s readiness to pursue accreditation.* | | **Score** |
| 1.1 | The institution commits to a purpose statement that defines beliefs about teaching and learning, including the expectations for learners. |  |
| 1.2 | Stakeholders collectively demonstrate actions to ensure the achievement of the institution’s purpose and desired outcomes for learners. |  |
| 1.3 | The institution engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence, including measurable results of improving student learning and professional practice. |  |
| 1.4 | The governing authority establishes and ensures adherence to policies that are designed to support institutional effectiveness. |  |
| 1.5 | The governing authority adheres to a code of ethics and functions within defined roles and responsibilities. |  |
| 1.6 | Leaders implement staff supervision and evaluation processes to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness. |  |
| 1.7 | Leaders implement operational processes and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning. |  |
| 1.8 | Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the institution’s purpose and direction. |  |
| 1.9 | The institution provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness. |  |
| 1.10 | Leaders collect and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups to inform decision-making that results in improvement. |  |

**Leadership Capacity Domain Narratives**

What were the areas of strength you noted? [focus on Standard scores of 4 or 3]. What actions are you implementing to sustain the areas of strength?

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What were areas in need of improvement [focus on Standard scores of 2 or 1] What plans are you making to improve the areas of need?

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# Learning Capacity Domain

The impact of teaching and learning on student achievement and success is the primary expectation of every institution. An effective learning culture is characterized by positive and productive teacher/learner relationships, high expectations and standards, a challenging and engaging curriculum, quality instruction and comprehensive support that enable all learners to be successful, and assessment practices (formative and summative) that monitor and measure student learning progress and achievement. Moreover, the quality institution evaluates the impact of its learning culture, including all programs and support services, and adjusts accordingly.

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| *Read and review each Standard carefully, then record a score from 1 to 4 (using the scale described in the instructions) for each Standard based on your perception of your institution’s readiness to pursue accreditation.* | | **Score** |
| 2.1 | Learners have equitable opportunities to develop skills and achieve the content and learning priorities established by the institution. |  |
| 2.2 | Learning culture promotes creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving. |  |
| 2.3 | The learning culture develops learners’ attitudes, beliefs and skills needed for success. |  |
| 2.4 | The institution has a formal structure to ensure learners develop positive relationships with and have adults/peers who support their educational experiences. |  |
| 2.5 | Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels. |  |
| 2.6 | The institution implements a process to ensure the curriculum is aligned to standards and best practices. |  |
| 2.7 | Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners’ needs and the institution’s learning expectations. |  |
| 2.8 | The institution provides programs and services for learners’ educational futures and career planning. |  |
| 2.9 | The institution implements, evaluates, and monitors processes to identify and address the specialized social, emotional, developmental, and academic needs of students. |  |
| 2.10 | The learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated. |  |
| 2.11 | Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to demonstrable improvement of student learning. |  |
| 2.12 | The institution implements a process to continuously assess its programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning. |  |

**Learning Capacity Domain Narratives**

What were the areas of strength you noted? [focus on Standard scores of 4 or 3]. What actions are you implementing to sustain the areas of strength?

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What were areas in need of improvement [focus on Standard scores of 2 or 1] What plans are you making to improve the areas of need?

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# Resource Capacity Domain

The use and distribution of resources support the stated mission of the institution. Institutions ensure that resources are distributed and utilized equitable so that the needs of all learners are adequately and effectively addressed. The utilization of resources includes support for professional learning for all staff. The institution examines the allocation and use of resources to ensure appropriate levels of funding sustainability, organizational effectiveness, and increase student learning.

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| *Read and review each Standard below carefully, then record a score from 1 to 4 (using the scale described in the instructions) for each Standard based on your perception of your institution’s readiness to pursue accreditation.* | | **Score** |
| 3.1 | The institution plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the institution’s effectiveness. |  |
| 3.2 | The institution’s professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve our performance and organizational effectiveness. |  |
| 3.3 | The institution provides induction, mentoring, and coaching programs that ensure all staff members of the knowledge and skills to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness. |  |
| 3.4 | The institution attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the institution’s purpose and direction. |  |
| 3.5 | The institution integrates digital resources into teaching, learning, and operations to improve professional practice, student performance, and organizational effectiveness. |  |
| 3.6 | The institution provides access to information resources and materials to support the curriculum, programs, and needs of students, staff, and the institution. |  |
| 3.7 | The institution demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning and use of resources in support of the institution’s purpose and direction. |  |
| 3.8 | The institution allocates human, material, and physical resources in alignment with the institutions identified needs and priorities to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness. |  |

**Resource Capacity Domain Narratives**

What were the areas of strength you noted? [focus on Standard scores of 4 or 3]. What actions are you implementing to sustain the areas of strength?

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What were areas in need of improvement [focus on Standard scores of 2 or 1] What plans are you making to improve the areas of need?

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# *(To be completed only if the school seeks accreditation for programs below 5-year old Kindergarten)*

# Early Learning Capacity Domain

The early learning program uses and distributes resources in support the stated mission of the institution. Institutions ensure that resources are distributed and utilized equitable in the context of a safe environment and developmentally appropriate education so that the needs of all young children are adequately and effectively addressed. The institution examines the allocation and use of resources to ensure appropriate levels of funding to support the care, education, learning, growth, and development of young children.

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| *Read and review each Standard below carefully, then record a score from 1 to 4 (using the scale described in the instructions) for each Standard based on your perception of your institution’s readiness to pursue accreditation.* | | **Score** |
| EL4.1 | Qualified professional and support staff are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the early learning program’s purpose, direction, and the educational program. |  |
| EL4.2 | The school employs qualified Administrators/Directors for each administrative position to support the early learning program’s purpose, direction, and the educational program |  |
| EL4.3 | The school employs qualified teachers for each professional teaching position to support the early learning program’s purpose, direction, and the educational program. |  |
| EL4.4 | The school employs qualified assistant teachers for each position to support the early learning program’s purpose, direction, and the educational program. |  |
| EL4.5 | The early learning program maintains a class-size and ratio of young children to teachers that support the care and developmentally appropriate learning, growth, and development of young children. |  |
| EL4.6 | Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the early learning program. |  |
| EL4.7 | The school maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all young children and staff. |  |
| EL4.8 | The school regularly assesses and maintains all indoor spaces to be accessible to all young children and adults, ventilated, lighted, and temperature-controlled, and the spaces that primarily serve each age-group of young children have direct access to bathroom/washing facilities, sinks, and drinking water. |  |
| EL4.9 | Each classroom/learning space has sufficient usable floor space and size to support the creativity and developmentally appropriate learning, growth, and development of young children, is highly functional for program delivery, and encourages positive staff-to-child relationships. |  |
| EL4.10 | Each classroom/learning space has furniture, equipment, and resources that are safe, clean, well maintained, adaptive, accessible, and developmentally appropriate for the age-group of young children they directly serve; are sufficient in number; and are organized in ways to support appropriate and effective implementation of the program. |  |
| EL4.11 | Indoor and outdoor equipment are safe, available to all young children, are developmentally appropriate for the age-group, have appropriate surfaces to support a variety of types of learning and play, and have impact material under all climbing equipment and swings. |  |
| EL4.12 | Each classroom/learning space has multiple learning/interest centers that are organized for independent use by young children, that support the learning activities of the instructional program and the creativity of young children, and that are well equipped with materials supportive of the purpose of each learning/interest center. |  |
| EL4.13 | Each classroom/learning space provides all children with safe and comfortable/cozy areas to relax, rest, or sleep that are continuously supervised by adults at all times. |  |
| EL4.14 | Children and early learning program personnel use a range of interactive media and information resources that support the educational programs. |  |
| EL4.15 | The technology infrastructure supports the school’s teaching, learning, and operational needs. |  |
| EL4.16 | Each classroom/learning space has displays that are used effectively as a learning tool, are developmentally appropriate for the age-group, attractively presented, appropriate in content, portray the current learning activities, and showcase children’s work and creativity. |  |
| EL4.17 | The school provides support services to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of young children that are integral to the educational program. |  |
| EL4.18 | Each child receives individual personal care by staff members who consistently promote the child’s general well-being, nutrition, health, and safety. |  |
| EL4.19 | Arrival and departure routines focus on the care and well-being of each child and encourage a daily exchange of family and school communications regarding the care, well-being, and educational progress of the child. |  |
| EL4.20 | The school provides services that support the counseling, assessment, and educational referral needs of all young children. |  |
| EL4.21 | All children, parents, and staff experience an environment of reciprocal respect, trust, and open communication in a fair and just way, respecting the needs and characteristics of each individual, and promoting a sense of community, belonging, ownership, and pride. |  |
| EL4.22 | All indoor and outdoor spaces are free from hazards and dangerous circumstances for young children and adults, and adults actively remove and resolve hazardous conditions as they may occur. |  |

**Standard 4 Narratives**

What were the areas of strength you noted? [focus on Standard scores of 4 or 3]. What actions are you implementing to sustain the areas of strength?

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What were areas in need of improvement [focus on Standard scores of 2 or 1] What plans are you making to improve the areas of need?

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# Student Performance

Briefly describe how well your students perform on assessments you typically administer at your institution. The description should not be limited to academic performance but should also include student performance from assessment data related to spiritual formation, spiritual growth, character development, and/or service learning.  This should not be a complete statistical analysis, simply a brief narrative description. If possible, give examples of awards and/or milestones your institution has garnered (Blue Ribbon or similar recognition from states or other organizations, National Merit Scholars, community service awards, spiritual growth, etc.).

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# Stakeholder Perceptions

Please briefly describe the perceptions and opinions of your stakeholders. If you have administered some type of stakeholder survey, provide a brief review of the results. If you have not administered formal surveys, write a brief synopsis of comments, complaints, or testimonials you have from stakeholders.

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