



INTRODUCTION

ICAA seeks to promote Christian harmony in the love and wisdom of Christ. The focus of the Association is to promote excellence in Christian education programs; however, the very nature of accreditation—involving interpretation of standards and the evaluation of schools—may, from time to time, result in differing opinions and disagreement, even though goals and purposes may be the same.

The Association encourages all member schools and representatives to work together for the improvement of ICAA. When challenges arise, all persons are encouraged to try to arrive at a solution that is equitable, that conforms with the purposes of the Association, and that is in a manner consistent with Christian ethical conduct.

APPEALS

Definition

An appeal is a formal action taken on behalf of a school in response to a recommendation or decision of an ICAA representative or governing body. Actions may be taken with regard to the following:

- Interpretations of policy by the ICAA office (i.e., rejection of schools applying to the ICAA accreditation program)
- Status recommendation of the Chairman
- Status recommendation or violations cited by the Site Visit Committee in the site report
- Review Committee status recommendation
- Accreditation status initial vote by the Commission for Accreditation

A school can file an appeal only if it feels that an ICAA representative or body has improperly followed established procedures, improperly interpreted standards and their criteria, or failed to take into account an extenuating circumstance that affects the school's performance but does not necessarily interfere with the purposes or standards of the Association.

Appeals will only be based on a disagreement with the interpretation or judgment of persons representing ICAA where the school feels that the interpretation or judgment has been inappropriately made and where a reconsideration could result in a different decision.

A school cannot appeal established procedures, standards, or formal actions taken by the Delegate Assembly. For example, a school cannot appeal a deadline for the payment of fees, the requirement of an official visit, or the existence of a standard. If a school has a problem in these areas, it should discuss the matter with the ICAA office or bring it before the Delegate Assembly for its consideration.

THE APPEAL PROCESS

At any of the six levels listed previously, an appeal may be filed. The following details the steps in the appeal process:

Step 1: The school should discuss the matter thoroughly with the ICAA representative or body whose decision it wishes to appeal. All attempts should be made to reach a consensus of opinion.

Step 2: If an agreement cannot be reached at Step 1, the school should complete the Request for Appeal form (available from the ICAA office) and submit one copy to the representative or body being appealed and one to the ICAA office.

Step 3: If an agreement still cannot be satisfactorily met, the appeal may progress to the next highest level in the organization structure until it reaches the ICAA Commission. Examples of the progression are as follows:

- ICAA office—Commission for Accreditation
(or Executive Committee)
- Chairman—Commission for Accreditation
(or Executive Committee)
- Site Visit Committee—Commission for Accreditation
(or Executive Committee)
- Review Committee (during accreditation Hearings/Meetings only)
- Commission for Accreditation

If necessary, the appeal can be referred by the ICAA office to the Executive Committee for its study and, if so merited, to the ICAA Commission (see Matt. 18:15-17). Complaints may not necessarily be negative. They may result from ambiguities in procedures, inconsistencies in policies, special circumstances, or the need for review or additional training of ICAA representatives. In these cases, the complaints can serve to help improve the Association and its service to member schools.

CONCLUSION

ICAA, with its principle of voluntary/peer recognition, seeks to be responsive to each member school and yet retain a balance of harmony and Christian unity within the entire Association. The opinion of each person involved in ICAA accreditation is valued. Sometimes God uses people and circumstances to take us where we would not otherwise go. Therefore, the Association encourages each school to maintain the right heart attitude so that even where there is disagreement, Christ and His purposes can reign supreme.