 **Inquiring Schools Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

**Inquiring schools are schools that are considering entrance into the FCIS accreditation process or membership as a New School Candidate (NSC). The following are questions frequently asked by inquiring schools. If your issue is not addressed here or on the website, please contact the FCIS Office at (813) 287-2820.**

***Can we be a member of FCIS without becoming accredited by FCIS?***

No. Full membership requires accreditation by FCIS. New School Candidates enter without accreditation; however, they must agree to undergo accreditation within their fourth full year of operation. FCIS does not have any other membership statuses.

***What are the costs of accreditation?***

Schools that pass the inquiry process will undergo a Site Visit by a representative of FCIS. The Site Visit costs nothing for the school. If, after the Site Visit, an official application is granted, a $500.00 application fee must be paid. Then, the actual accreditation evaluation is scheduled. The school is responsible for the expenses of the visiting team, including food, lodging, and reimbursement for mileage and other travel expenses. Therefore, the cost of the evaluation varies depending on the size of the team. FCIS does not charge accreditation fees.

***How many people will be on the team that visits my school?***

Team sizes are determined by FCIS Evaluation Policies. Currently, the required sizes are as follows:

* Elementary schools with 250 students or less: 4-5 team members
* Elementary schools with 251 or more students: 4-8 team members
* Elementary/Middle School combinations with 300 or less students: 6-7 team members
* Elementary/Middle School combinations with 301 or more students: 8-10 team members
* Elementary/Middle School/High School with less than 500 students: 10-12 team members
* Elementary/Middle School/High School with more than 500 students: 12-14 team members
* Middle School/High School combinations with up to 500 students: 6-10 team members
* Middle School/High School combinations with 500 or more students: 10-14 team members
* High School only up to 500 students: 6-10 team members
* High School only between 500 and 800 students: 10-12 team members
* High School only with more than 800 students: 12-14 team members

***Our students take all of their classes online. Can we be accredited?***

Your school may be accredited if and only if all of the courses are created by your school and are taught by employees of your school. If the students are taking courses from an outside provider (such as FLVS or Laurel Springs), the school is not eligible for accreditation with FCIS.

***Once we become accredited member, what are the annual dues?***

Annual dues are dependent upon the number of students in the school. These are the 2017-2018 dues for FCIS members:

1-100 students $316.00 + $7.37 per each student

101-200 students $1727.00 + $5.50 per each student over 100

201-300 students $2806.00 + $4.51 per each student over 200

301-400 students $3678.00 + $3.94 per each student over 300

401-500 students $4513.00 + $3.22 per each student over 400

501-700 students $5151.00 + $2.39 per each student over 500

701-1000 students $6121.00 + $2.33 per each student over 700

Over 1000 students  $7465.00 + $2.13 per each student over 1000

***How can we learn more about the accreditation process? Is there training?***

Face-to-face training takes place at the annual FCIS Convention, which takes place each November. Training is also available via webinars. For more information on these events, see the “Professional Development” section of the FCIS website. Once a school is an applying school, its faculty and staff may also participate as evaluation team members for other schools. Consult the “Accreditation” section of the FCIS website for more information about being a team member.

***Can we get accredited by more than one accrediting association at a time?***

Yes. FCIS has cooperative agreements with FKC (the Florida Kindergarten Council), AdvancED-SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools), the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), and SAIS (Southern Association of Independent Schools). You should note that any school that has grades kindergarten and below must also be accredited by FKC, so, in that case, the school’s original accreditation will include FKC by default. To add SAIS, ACSI or AdvancED-SACS, contact the FCIS office. Also, look under “Accreditation” on the FCIS website to learn more about Joint Accreditation.

***We are already accredited by one of the associations you mentioned. Can we follow their accreditation process and just add FCIS to it?***

No. Our cooperative agreements with SAIS, ACSI and AdvancED-SACS state that FCIS will be the lead agency on all joint evaluations. Therefore, the school must complete the FCIS Self-Study and follow FCIS evaluation protocols.

***Once we are an applying school, may we use the FCIS logo on our website or other marketing materials?***

No. Only New School Candidates and full members may use the FCIS logo.

***Can applying schools participate in FCIS’s Master-Inservice Program (MIP)?***

Only full members may use the MIP. New School Candidates and applying schools are not eligible.