



FCIS is happy to welcome Melissa Alton as its new Director of Accreditation. After earning her BA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Melissa Alton worked in radio broadcasting as an on-air personality in the nation's 25th largest market – Charlotte, NC. Four years later, Melissa entered graduate school and began her teaching career in UNC-Charlotte's English Department, where she also served as the President of the Adjunct Faculty Association.

Melissa began her career in independent education as a tutor and teacher at Manus Academy and a summer instructor at Charlotte Country Day School. In 1999, Melissa relocated to Florida to take a position at Florida Air Academy in Melbourne. During her 15-year tenure at the academy, she held the positions of teacher, Tutoring Program Director, English Department Head, Assistant Principal, and Principal.

Currently, Melissa is working towards her second Master's degree in the University of Florida's Master's of Educational Leadership program. She has served the College Board for eight years as an essay evaluator and was recently appointed to the competitive AP Advocacy Fellows program. In addition, Melissa is a member of the Brevard Culture Alliance Board of Directors, where she lends her expertise on both the Finance and Education Committees.

A joint FCIS-SACS evaluation at Florida Air Academy in 2001 sparked Melissa's interest in accreditation. After attending accreditation information and training sessions at multiple annual FCIS and AdvancED Florida state conventions, she embarked on an intensive study of school improvement and accreditation through a program offered by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. During the last ten years, Melissa has served on FCIS Evaluation teams and as a Quality Assurance Review Team member for AdvancED. Her experiences as an evaluator and as the Steering Committee Chair at her own school, as well as her 15 years as a member of Florida's independent school community, make her a valuable addition to the FCIS team.