



# Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Accreditation ACCREDITATION NEWS

December 2018

Volume XXIII, Beatrice Weiland, Editor

### **Mission:**

The Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Accreditation annually accredits schools that meet rigorous standards of excellence and demonstrate continuous school improvement.

### **Board of Directors:**

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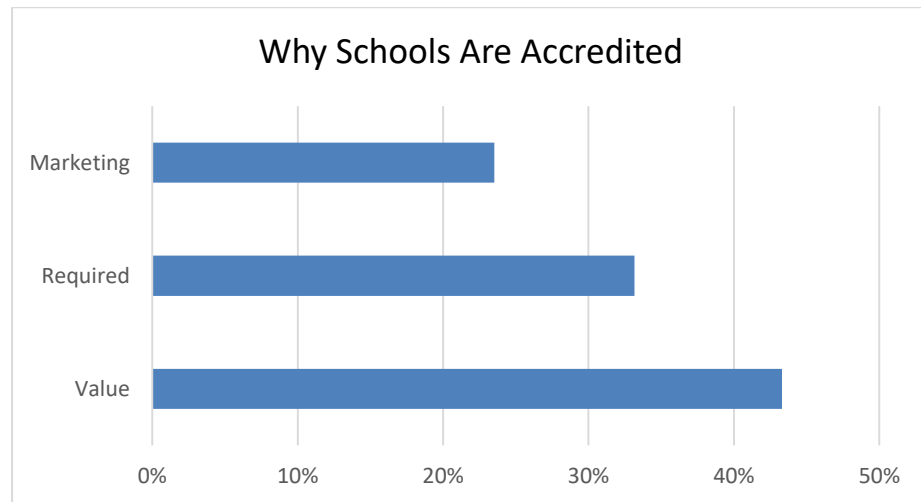
Susa Givens (Member-  
at-Large)

Beatrice Weiland,  
Independents  
(Executive Director)

## Membership Survey Results

In September, a survey was made available to the 261 WRISA accredited schools. Approximately 62% of schools responded to the survey. Thank you to all that participated. The Executive Director contacted all respondents who requested a personalized reply. The WRISA Board continues to analyze the results with the hope of improving service to schools and outreach.

Of particular interest was the reasons schools gave for being accredited (Item #17). The three themes that emerged most often focused on: one, the value of the accrediting process for self assessment, education program evaluation, and school improvement; two, the marketing opportunity to stakeholders, and interested parties; and, three, the requirement by the State of Wisconsin for Parental Choice and/or their own jurisdiction's policy.



## Board Welcomes New Members

**Kevin Vos**, principal at Brookfield Christian School, has been appointed as representative for Christian Schools International (CSI) jurisdiction. Kevin is replacing **Dave Van Swol**. **Todd Blahnik**, superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Green Bay, has been appointed as the representative for the Diocese of Green Bay jurisdiction. Todd has been appointed to replace **Sr. Kay Klackner**. WRISA extends its gratitude to Dave Van Swol and Sr. Kay Klackner. Both have held various offices on the executive committee and have served as representatives for the schools in their WRISA jurisdictions for many years.

## Recognitions and Partnerships

The **Department of Homeland Security (DHS)** recognizes WRISA accredited schools seeking to enroll non-immigrant foreign students under the 'Student and Exchange Visitor Program' (SEVP) and 'Student/Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) certification process. As such, WRISA accredited schools are considered to be recognized by the U. S. Department of Education.

The **National Honor Society (NHS)** and the **National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) Council** recognize WRISA accreditation.

WRISA is approved by the **State of Wisconsin** to pre-accredit and accredit schools for the parental choice programs. Currently, WRISA accredits over 145 parental choice schools.

WRISA is a member of the **National Federation of Non-Public School State Accrediting Associations (NFSSAA)** composed of state accrediting associations with a common purpose of promoting high quality non-public education. They serve nearly 200,000 children. [www.nfnssaa.com](http://www.nfnssaa.com)

The **Wisconsin Health and Educational Facilities Authority (WHEFA)** recognizes WRISA accredited schools that are looking for low cost capital financing for building and equipment improvement, and expansion needs. This includes old loans as well as new funding. To learn more about financing options go to [www.whefa.com](http://www.whefa.com).

**Middle States Association: Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA\_CESS)** a premiere 'regionally recognized' accrediting association recognizes WRISA Standards and accrediting protocols and has entered into a co-operative agreement with WRISA for those schools seeking additional accreditation by a 'regionally recognized' accrediting association. For more information go to: [www.msa-cess.org](http://www.msa-cess.org) or contact the WRISA Executive Director.

## Board Accredits 261 Schools

At the June and November meetings, the Board of Directors accredited 261 schools. To view the complete list of schools, visit the WRISA website: [www.wrisa.net](http://www.wrisa.net) after January 1, 2019 and click on the "WRISA Schools" link.

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## Schools Accredited for a Subsequent Cycle

Congratulations to the following previously accredited schools who continue to meet the WRISA Standards with Quality Indicators and demonstrate their commitment to excellence. These schools engaged in a Self Study process and underwent an intense review process by an impartial team of educational professionals. All engage in strategic planning. *(Alphabetized by location)*

St. Francis Xavier School	Cross Plains	St. Gregory the Great School	Milwaukee
St. Mary's Visitation Parish School	Elm Grove	St. Margaret Mary School	Milwaukee
Peace Lutheran School	Hartford	Wisconsin Lutheran High School	Milwaukee
St. Gabriel School	Hubertus	Holy Apostles School	New Berlin
St. Williams School	Janesville	Luther High School	Onalaska
Divine Savior Catholic School	Kiel	Oostburg Christian School	Oostburg
Columbus Catholic High School	Marshfield	St. Luke School	Plain
Columbus Catholic Middle School	Marshfield	John Paul II Academy	Racine
Our Lady Queen of Peace Intermediate	Marshfield	St. Rita School	Racine
St. John the Baptist Primary	Marshfield	St. John/Sacred Heart School	Sherwood
Our Lady Queen of Peace School	Madison	St. Robert School	Shorewood
		Holy Angels School	West Bend

## Schools Accepted into Candidacy

The following schools have successfully met the WRISA pre-accreditation criteria, and have been accepted as Candidates. Congratulations! *(Alphabetized by location)*

St. Anthony De Padua	Athens	Global Nurse Leaders Academy	Milwaukee
St. Mary School	Colby	Nova Tech High School	Milwaukee
St. Augustine School	Hartford	Shalom High School	Milwaukee
Aquinas Academy	Menomonee Falls	Trinity Academy	Pewaukee
City School	Milwaukee	Guidance Academy	South Milwaukee

## Schools Receiving Initial Accreditation

WRISA welcomes the following new members who successfully completed their Self Study and hosted a Visiting Team composed of peer professionals in education. These schools were found to be in compliance with the WRISA Standards with Quality Indicators and developed a Plan for ongoing growth and development of their educational programs. Congratulations! *(Alphabetized by location)*

Community Christian School of Baraboo	Baraboo	*Assumption Middle School	Wisconsin Rapids
*King's Academy Christian School	Milwaukee	*Assumption High School	Wisconsin Rapids
St. John XXIII Catholic School	Port Washington	*Our Lady Queen of Heaven	Wisconsin Rapids
CERT School	Racine	*St. Vincent de Paul School	Wisconsin Rapids
*St. Catherine's High School	Racine		

\*Denotes schools accredited by another accrediting association and now accredited by WRISA.

## WCRIS 2019 Leadership Conference



Mark your calendar to attend the Wisconsin Council of Religious and Independent Schools' (WCRIS) Annual Leadership Conference at Country Springs Hotel, 2810 Gulf Rd. in Pewaukee, on March 8, 2019.

**Keynote Speaker: Meghan Cox Gurdon**, the Wall Street Journal Children's Book Reviewer, will talk about the culture being created for students by contemporary children's literature.

**Lunch Speaker: Joe McTighe** former Executive Director of the Council of American Private Education (CAPE), will speak about the role that private schools play in securing religious freedom in America.

Topics include:

- Improving your school's fundraising capacities;
- Aligning your mission and curriculum to attract more students; and more!

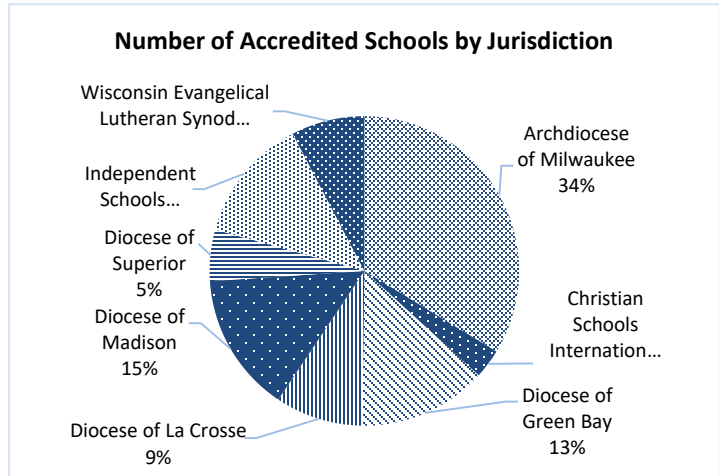
Title II-A eligible.

**Early bird registration ends on January 11, 2019.**

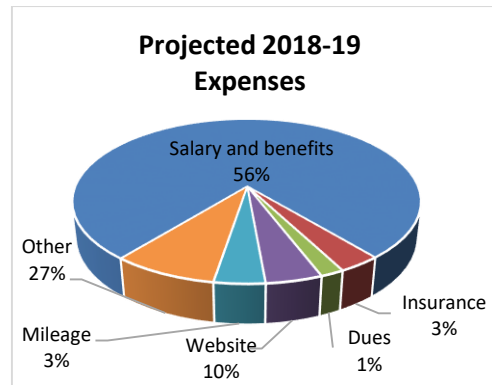
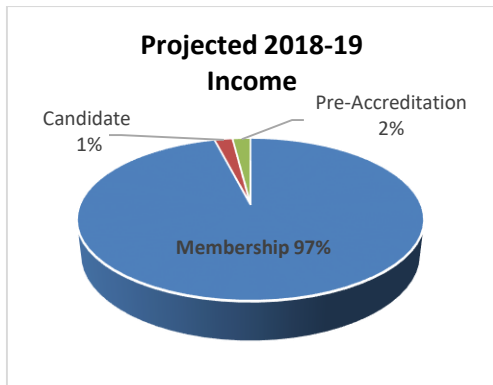
To learn more and register, go to: [www.wcris.org](http://www.wcris.org).

# End of Year Report

Currently, WRISA accredits 261 non-public schools serving more than 53,000 students throughout the great State of Wisconsin. This includes elementary, middle, high schools, and elementary through high school combinations. The diverse school communities include faith-based, independent, and specialty schools serving the needs unique to their student populations. In addition, there are 15 candidate schools with approximately 2,000 children enrolled. The smallest accredited school has ten or fewer students enrolled. The largest enrollment exceeds 1,700 students.



Thanks to sound fiscal management by the WRISA Board of Directors, WRISA's budget continues to operate in the black. The projected income for the 2018-19 school year is \$75,400 which is offset by projected expenses of \$75,400. Annual membership fees from 261 schools account for 97% of the income. The remainder comes from pre-accreditation applications, and candidate applications and progress report fees. Investment dividends are re-invested. Income is used to cover expenses including but not limited to: maintaining the WRISA office and website; paying insurance and professional membership dues; purchasing supplies and equipment; providing workshops and in-services; reimbursing work-related expenses such as mileage; and paying wages for one part time employee, the executive director.



The primary responsibility of the WRISA Board of Directors is the accreditation of religious and independent schools. Always striving to accomplish its mission and serve school communities and their stakeholders, the Board of Directors accomplished the following goals during the 2017-18 school year.

- Developed a marketing plan to promote WRISA and improve accrediting services to all non-public schools in Wisconsin.
- Continued training Catholic schools on the Wisconsin Catholic Schools Accreditation Self Study document.
- Reviewed Standard Quality Indicators and protocols as they apply to 'system of schools'.
- Reviewed current Administrative Handbook for schools conducting a Self Study.
- Published a membership survey.

- More than 99% of principals of WRISA schools hold a master's degree or higher in educational leadership. Majority of principals hold state principal licenses.
- More than 99% of teachers of WRISA schools have bachelor's degrees or higher. The majority of teachers have state teaching licenses.
- Others have Plans of Action to meet WRISA's education requirements.

During Strategic Planning meetings, the Board developed the following goals for the 2018-19 school year:

- Revise the Self Study Administrative Handbook to include guidelines for schools within a system of schools.
- Develop Self Study protocols for schools within a system of schools.
- Create new WRISA logo and marketing materials as part of larger marketing plan.
- Continue training Catholic schools on the Wisconsin Catholic Schools Accreditation Self Study document.
- Revise certain Standard Quality Indicators as they apply to high schools.
- Re-evaluate Self Study survey questions and processes related to administering surveys. Align WRISA survey questions with quality indicators.
- Create an online capacity for paperless Self Study and Annual Reports.
- Review and update the By-laws, if needed.

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## 2018-19 WRISA Calendar

7/9/2018	WRISA sends Notification of Accreditation letters to DPI.
8/15/2018	Executive Director emails instructions for filing Annual Reports to jurisdiction representatives to share with WRISA accredited schools.
8/15 - 9/29/2018	Principals updated their Annual Reports packet on WRISA website and mailed hard copies to jurisdiction's representative.
9/21/2018	WRISA Board engages in Strategic Planning. 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac.
9/21/2018	Principals enter 3rd Friday in September student count into Annual Report Packet and finalize Annual Report.
9/21 - 9/29/2018	Principals mail Annual Report hard copy to their WRISA Representative.
10/1/2018	All Annual Reports and membership fees are due at Representative's office.
10/1 - 10/29/2018	Jurisdictions review Annual Reports and send results to Executive Director.
11/15/2018	WRISA Board Meeting. 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Holy Name Heights, Madison.
3/7/2019	WRISA Annual Board Meeting. 9:30-3:00. Queen of Apostles Church – N35W23360 Capitol Dr., Pewaukee.
3/8/2019	WCRIS Annual Leadership Conference. Country Springs Hotel, 2810 Gulf Rd., Pewaukee.
4/15/2019	WRISA office emails instructions to Representatives for schools that hosted a Site Visit in 2018-19.
6/1/2019	Schools that hosted a Site Visit during 2018-19 send Visiting Team Report and new Long Range Plan to Representative.
6/19/2019	WRISA Board Meeting. 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Holy Name Heights, Madison.
6/2019	TBD NFNSSAA Annual Meeting. Executive Director attends. Place TBD
7/2019	Executive Director sends Notifications of Accreditation to DPI.
8/15/2019	Executive Director emails instructions to Jurisdiction Representatives for schools to file Annual Reports. Jurisdictions notify schools.
8/15 - 9/29/2019	Principals update their Annual Report packet on WRISA website and mail hard copy to their WRISA representative so it is received no later than 10/1/2019.
9/20/2019	Principals enter 3rd Friday in September student count into Annual Report Packet.
9/20 - 9/29/2019	Principals mail Annual Report hard copy to their Representative.
10/1/2019	All Annual Reports and membership fees are due at Representative's office.