

Weekly Eagle News – Head of Schools

My Favorite Parents:

Coming up in the middle of October, we will have special guests on campus for three days. A site visit team of educational leaders under the auspices of WASC, one of our accrediting agencies, will be on campus October 15-18 to review our self-study that we conducted over the past 15 months. We wrote a lengthy report that responds to the standards and prompts WASC has developed as essential to quality education.

I love the accreditation process because it is primarily about self-assessment towards continuous improvement. Redlands Christian has embraced that approach. More than in any previous accreditation cycle (typically six years), our whole community, including parent representatives, were involved in the process of creating the self study and I believe it captures our strengths and where we need to continue to improve. I am grateful to Tim Fenderson, our Chief Academic Officer, and Betty Crocker, our Communications Director, for their leadership in this process.

To give you a bit of perspective, we receive institutional certification through both WASC and CESA. WASC is the primary secular accrediting agency in the western states, while CESA's institutional review is the most rigorous process for Christian schools nationally. We are one of only about 50 schools in the United States who have successfully completed CESA's institutional review.

While the site visit team is on campus, they will meet with the various committees of faculty, staff and parents who helped to develop the self study report. They will visit classes, meet with teachers, talk with administrators, and get a real sense of what makes our school tick. Our message to teachers (and now to you as parents as well) is that we just need to be ourselves. This school does a very good job. We are not perfect but have done a great job in the self-study process of identifying where we need to continue to improve.

In the education world, accreditation is not a "white glove inspection" as it is primarily about a process of self-improvement; nor, is it an opportunity to air grievances – those should be the kinds of things that are brought to the attention of school leaders so that they can be addressed.

We will be certain to report back on the results of this process as they become available. The site visit team completes a report that will go to the WASC Commission. The WASC Commission will make a decision on our accreditation status, typically a few months after the visit.

Extras:

Our Fall Parent Society will take place on Monday, October 30th at 7 pm at the lower school gym with a video of the updates provided to parents by the end of the week (for those who cannot make it). We are planning an ice cream sundae bar to make the evening more fun! This is an opportunity to hear updates from each principal and a state-of-the-school address from me. Typically, there is a brief report from a couple of board committee leads too. While there are opportunities for questions from the audience, if you have a personal issue or frustration, this is typically not the best place to address it. Set up an individual appointment with the person involved and, if that does not resolve it, escalate it to the division principal.

Enjoy your week!

Brian