

Subject: Notice of ATS Decision
Date: Friday, February 21, 2025 at 7:25:08 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: Starr King School for the Ministry
To: Huffman, Xander



Dear Starr King students,

We write to you today to inform you that on February 4 the Board of Commissioners of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) voted to reaffirm Starr King School for the Ministry's accreditation for a period of five years.

Alongside this reaffirmation, the commissioners have issued a warning, effective as of February 21, that we are "at risk of not meeting" ATS Standard 10.3 pertaining to financial resources. Specifically, ATS has asked Starr King to demonstrate additional efforts toward achieving "sufficient and stable revenue streams and financial resources to achieve [our] mission with educational quality and financial stability." **We are to submit a report to ATS documenting these efforts by November 1, 2027.**

In our accreditation self-study report and in our meetings with the ATS accreditation visiting team last September, we strove for complete honesty about both the strengths and the challenges of our beloved school. The visiting team praised our commitment to Starr King's distinctive mission and educational philosophy, while noting finances as the greatest concern and recommending in their preliminary report that the ATS commissioners impose this warning.

Our situation is far from unique. Many of our sister schools are experiencing similar financial headwinds as fewer students enroll, denominations reduce support, and administrative costs rise. All of us here are taking this warning seriously: the school's trustees and administration, combined with the faculty and staff, are taking a more focused look at ways Starr King can increase donor support, enhance student recruitment, and make efficient use of our resources. This focused look includes three ongoing working groups meant to examine different approaches to the issue.

All of us continue to think creatively about how best to prepare progressive religious and social change leaders for a changing cultural, economic, and political landscape. As we face a future that is always uncertain, we will remain ever faithful to our calling and our shared values. We are grateful to walk forward with you into that future.

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