



WASC Visiting Committee Member Training

January – March 2010





Goals

- Roles/responsibilities
- FOL process and its relationship to accountability and ongoing school improvement
- Thorough knowledge of WASC criteria
- Importance of data
- Review school's evidence



Key Concepts

- How are students achieving?
- Is the school doing everything possible to support high achievement for all its students?



Ongoing Accreditation Process

Does annual data analysis...

- provide insight about the action plan's impact on student learning?
- lead to refinement of the action plan?

Final Product: One Umbrella Plan



- Strategic Plan
- Technology Plan
- Staff Development Plan



WASC Six-Year Cycle

Year Six — Past Cycle: Completion of Self-Study/Visit

Year One: Progress Report, Updated Profile and Refinement of Action Plan

Year Two: Progress Report, Updated Profile and Refinement of Action Plan

Year Three: Mid-term Progress Report with Updated Profile (may include one day review) Refinement of Action Plan

Year Four: Progress Report, Updated Profile and Refinement of Action Plan

Year Five: Review of all Progress and Program Analysis (as part of next self-study)

Year Six: Completion of Self-Study, including resulting Action Plan and Visit



- What is the ideal based upon?
 - Expected Schoolwide Learning Results
 - Academic Standards
 - WASC Criteria
- What currently exists and how effective is it?
 - supported by analysis of data/information
- What and how will we modify?
 - development of schoolwide action plan



Value-Added Test

Schools add value by:

- Increasing what students know
- Increasing what students can do
- Improving how students feel
 - about themselves
 - about others
 - about learning



Preparing for the Visit

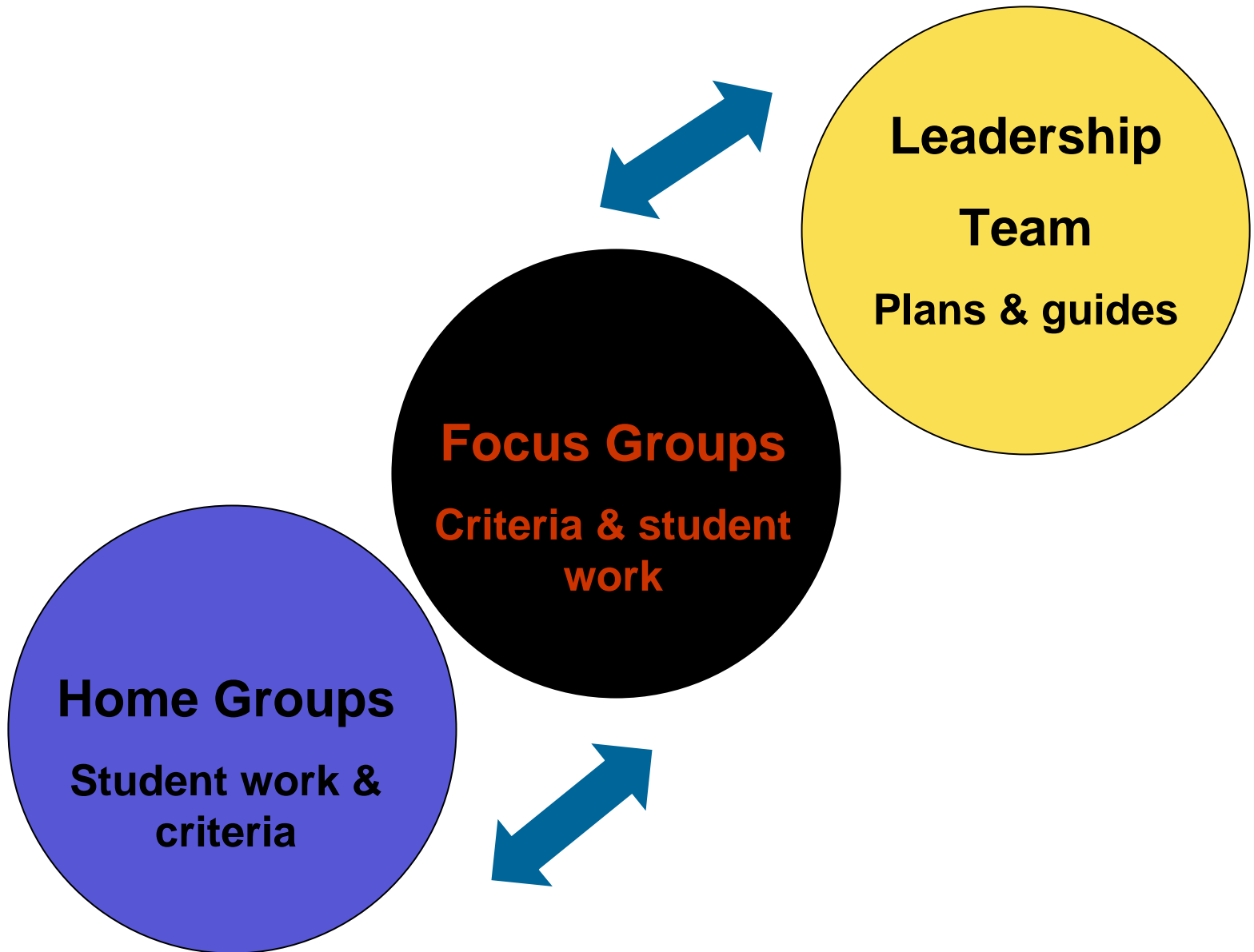




Outcomes or Parameters of Self-Study

1. Involvement and Participation

- Home groups
- Focus Groups
- Leadership Team





Outcomes or Parameters of Self-Study cont.

2. Clarification of the school's purpose and the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide student goals)



Sample: Every student will be an effective communicator

Each student may demonstrate this by:

- Writing English clearly and proficiently
- Receiving information and constructing meaning through reading and listening skills
- Using verbal language to communicate clearly when giving presentations to groups or talking with other individuals



Outcomes or Parameters of Self-Study cont.

3. Assessment of school program and impact on students based on learning results, curricular standards, and WASC criteria

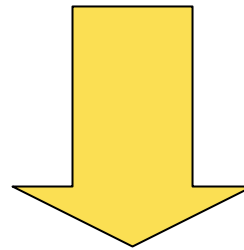


Self-Study Findings

Criteria Findings	Supporting Evidence

Self-Study Findings cont.

1. Areas to celebrate—yet maintain
2. Areas that need development and growth



Direct alignment with growth areas and strengths and action plan



Outcomes or Parameters of Self-Study cont.

4. Action plan development and refinement
5. Follow-up process: implementation and monitoring of accomplishments



Components: Action Plan Section

- Statement of area for improvement
- Brief statement of rationale
- Expected schoolwide learning results addressed
- Specific steps
- Timeline
- Person(s) responsible and involved
- Resources
- Ways of assessing progress
- Means to report progress to all school community members



Tasks

Schools given model process with self-check questions





Self-Study Tasks

1. Develop profile
2. Clarify expected schoolwide learning results
3. Summarize progress
4. Review criteria, determine evidence needed in comparison to criteria/ learning results
5. Gather and analyze evidence
6. Analyze and synthesize all information and data
- 7-9. Create action plan, ensure consensus, establish follow-up process



Report Formats

- See Comparison Chart of Formats
 - Self-Study Report
 - Visiting Committee Report



Visiting Committee Profile Emphases

- Visiting Committee Report, Chapter I:
Include important information regarding student performance.
(Include charts, tables from school profile)



Card 1, Stage 1

- B. Review criteria, guide questions, rubrics and appropriate curricular references
- C. Read the School Report
- D. Compare the school's self-study findings to the concepts of the criteria
- E. Write questions about concerns, clarifications, and evidence to be pursued during the visit
- F. Write tentative narrative statements for assigned sections of the VC Report



Criteria Categories

- Organization for Student Learning
- Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
- Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth
- Resource Management and Development



WASC Criteria

As a Visiting Committee member:

- What are the key concepts of the WASC criteria?
- What critical data and information is needed to determine the degree to which the WASC criteria are met?

(Activity: Practice answering these questions for at least one criterion.)



Pre-reading & Writing





Examining Data

Use sample profile excerpts in workshop booklet

- 1) Individually read
- 2) Discuss these questions as a total group
 - Who are the students?
 - What does the data tell you about achievement of all students?
 - What questions are raised by the data?



Activity

1. Review criteria, guide questions, suggested evidence, and indicators.
2. Read sample summary.
3. Compare self-study findings to concepts of the criteria connected to learning results and academic standards.
4. Was evidence analyzed representative of all students and connected to learning results?
5. Write notes/questions.
6. Practice writing a short paragraph summarizing findings for the sample summary.



VC Analysis of Focus Group Summary

Ask...

- Do the findings respond to what is being asked by the criteria guide question(s)?
- How did the evidence support ...
 - ❖ the findings?
 - ❖ the strengths:
 - ❖ the prioritized growth needs?
- Has the school gained insight about the degree to which learning is being supported?



Card 1, Stages II-III

Stage II: Initial VC Member Meeting

- A. Discuss School Report in relationship to criteria: perceptions, questions and concerns
- B. Review the tentative narrative statements
- C. Decide on the critical areas of focus for evidence analysis during the visit

Stage III: Synthesis Meeting (Night Meetings)

Discuss and synthesize with other VC members the following:

- 1. Key concepts of criteria
- 2. School Report
- 3. Findings during visit



Schedule

Sunday-Wednesday generally





Initial VC Meeting

- What have we learned from our pre-visit preparation about this school's self-study and student learning?



Focusing VC Work on Student Learning

How can the visiting committee focus its review and analysis of evidence through...

- Examining student work and other information
- Observing students and other aspects of the program
- Interviewing students and others



School Meetings and Dialogue: Questions and Techniques





Ideas for Meetings

- Start and end on time
- Build rapport
- Be sensitive
- Gather responses from all in group
- Watch nonverbal behavior
- Suspend assumptions
- Pace interaction
- Carefully select words
- Watch rate of speech, tone and volume
- Avoid “why” questions, if possible
- Listen more than you talk



Sample Discussion Starters

- Help us understand...
- Could you clarify...?
- We recognize that...
- We understand from the self-study that.... What led to this conclusion?
- Is this characteristic of?
- What factors contributed to these results?
- What elements of the student/ community profile are related to....?

See Reference Card 2



Sample Questions:

- What have you learned?
- What insights have you had since you prepared the summary?
- Talk about evidence that led to the conclusions made.
- What have you learned about student learning and success?
- What can you as a school do to improve learning for each and every student?

See Reference Card 2



Schoolwide Action Planning based on self-study findings....

Regularly link discussion to “next steps” as noted in proposed updated schoolwide action plan.

Sample Question:

Visualize what will be different for students....

- One year from now?
- Two years from now?
- Three years from now?



Initial Leadership Team Meeting

How can we increase increase our understanding of the school's self-study findings and student learning through the initial dialogue with school leaders?



Focus Group Meetings

- Techniques
- Powerful questions about
 - Criteria
 - Expected schoolwide learning results
 - Academic standards
 - Critical academic needs
 - Evidence analyzed
 - All students



Activity Directions: Imagine that you are a VC at this high school. Extrapolate from what you have read in the excerpts:

- For the Focus Group to which you are assigned, decide what you need to learn
- Develop questions and strategies for conducting the 1-1/2 to 2-hour Focus Group meeting (See Reference Card 2)
- Chart the questions
- Assign a reporter to share the proposed strategies and questions for conducting the Focus Group meeting



Other Meetings

- What should be addressed?
- Who will participate from the VC?
- What is the relationship between these and the Focus Group meetings?

Final Product: One Umbrella Plan



- Strategic Plan
- Technology Plan
- Staff Development Plan



Action Plan: Ideas for Questions

- Addressing the major areas for improvement and VC's critical areas?
- Enhancing learning of all students?
- Expected schoolwide learning results being addressed through plan?
- Integrating other initiatives--one plan?
- Feasible and realistic?
- Sufficient commitment?
- Sound follow-up process?



Leadership Team/VC Activity

- Generate questions and issues for Leadership Team about plan.
(See Reference Card 2, Side 2)
- Sample questions:
 - Process used to determine growth areas addressed in plan?
 - To what degree do action plan sections align with prioritized growth areas?
 - Do sections address all students?
- Share questions with entire group.



VC Synthesis Meetings

- What should the VC include at these daily meetings based on key concepts of the criteria, the Self-Study, and findings during the visit?



Card 1, Stage IV

Stage IV: Closure

- A. Share draft report with Leadership Team and make appropriate modifications
- B. Decide on recommended term
- C. Share final report with school
- D. Encourage ongoing school site follow-up



Term Determination

How can the VC ensure that the recommended accreditation term is aligned with the VC report?



Terms

- Six years: written progress report at end of three years
- Six Years with a review: written progress report plus one-day visit
- Three years: progress reports, three year two-day visit to extend term one year, three years or deny
- One or Two years: progress report, one-day visit to extend term up to three years or deny
- Denial: reasons detailed in Visiting Committee report



Accreditation Term Factors

1. Involvement and collaboration in doing self-study to accomplish the five parameters of self-study
2. Defining purpose/expected schoolwide learning results



Accreditation Term Factors cont.

3. Use of professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, and analyze student performance data
4. Acceptable student achievement based on expected schoolwide learning results, standards, institutional expectations



Accreditation Term Factors (cont.)

Degree of effectiveness in meeting the WASC criteria to support high achievement for all students...

- Organization for Student Learning
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Support for Student Personal and Academic growth
- Resource Management and Development



Accreditation Term Factors (cont.)

9. Alignment of action plan to school's areas of greatest need to support high achievement of all students

10. Capacity to implement and monitor the schoolwide action plan

11. Use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive school improvement



How can I prepare?

- What are my priorities?
- What are the critical elements for a successful visit?
- Specifically, what are the non-negotiables of a successful WASC visit?