ACS WASC Focus on Learning On Target for 21st Century Schools
• Background of ACS WASC accreditation
• What is accreditation?
• Why accreditation is so important?
• ACS WASC seven accreditation principles
• Focus on Learning (FOL) Accreditation’s Cycle of Quality
  ✓ Self-Study
  ✓ The Visit
  ✓ The Follow-up or Ongoing Improvement
• Getting Started: The Initial Visit Process
• Focus on Learning: a powerful process for school change
Accrediting Commission for Schools
Western Association of Schools and College (ACS WASC)

• A private, nonprofit, regional accrediting association in the United States
• Serves schools in California, Hawaii, Pacific Islands, and worldwide, especially East Asia (Hague, 1961)
• Works closely with the U.S. Department of State, Office of Overseas Schools
Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC

- Extends services to over 4,600 pre-K to 12 elementary and secondary public and private schools of various types (350 in East Asia)
- Works with 18 other associations in joint processes, such as California and Hawaii state departments of education (CDE, HIDOE) WCEA, SDA, CIS, ACSI,
- ACS WASC Commission (Board) composed of 32 members from various organizations
Ongoing Journey
What is Accreditation?

• The quality or state of being trustworthy or credible (Root is French word meaning “to credit”)

• An ongoing Cycle of Quality...
  – a “non-hyperventilating” school improvement process that supports high-quality student learning

• Equivalent to a University Educational Course entitled: Change 101
Accreditation: A Value-Added Evaluation

Schools add value by...

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

- Assures a school community school is trustworthy for student learning in a global society
- Validates integrity of school’s program and transcripts worldwide for university acceptance
- Fosters ongoing improvement to support learning
- Provides valuable insight from educators visiting the school
- Benefits schools choosing collaborative processes, e.g., ACS WASC/CDE
I taught Spot how to whistle.

I don't hear him whistling.

I said I taught him. I didn't say he learned it.
ACS WASC Accreditation Cycle

Focus on Learning

Reassess → Assess

Follow-up → Plan

Self-Study

Visit → Implement
ACS WASC Accreditation Cycle of Quality

ACS WASC Seven Accreditation Principles
1. Accomplishment of school purpose (core beliefs, vision, mission) and schoolwide learner outcomes...

What all students should know, understand and be able to do in order to be globally competent, i.e., a global citizen.
Schoolwide Learner Outcomes

Global
Interdisciplinary
All students
Assessable
Sample Schoolwide Learner Outcome

ASIJ educates students to be effective communicators who...

Express ideas, emotions, and personal experiences clearly and creatively through the written and spoken word and through the arts.

Listen critically with understanding and empathy.
EAGLES: Schoolwide Learner Outcomes

SAS students will be global-minded citizens who...

Act with the future in mind

Embrace diversity

Engage responsibly in the world’s problems with compassion, empathy, and tolerance

Respect and support family and community

Protect and advocate for local and global environments
SAS students will be literate individuals who...

Are multi-lingual

Articulate communicators in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and through artistic expression

Can analyze information to create new knowledge and understandings

Are literate in information and communication technologies
SAS students will be skilled inquirers who...

- Apply content knowledge and skills in authentic situations
- Strive for academic excellence
- Can express themselves through sound, movement and image
- Apply skills and knowledge to broader systems
- Reason soundly and critically
2. High achievement of all students based on schoolwide learner outcomes/curricular standards
3. Use of multiple ways to analyze data about student achievement
4. Program evaluation in relation to schoolwide learner outcomes, standards and research-based ACS WASC criteria and indicators
ACS WASC Criteria Categories

- Organization for Student Learning
- Resource Management and Allocation
- Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth
- Focus on Student Learning
- How Assessment is Used
- What Students Learn
- How Students Learn
ACS WASC Seven Accreditation Principles

5. Alignment of findings to a schoolwide action plan

- Strategic Plan
- Technology Plan
- Professional Development Plan
6. Evaluation of ongoing improvement and impact on student learning

7. Total involvement/collaboration of all leaders, board members, teachers, staff, students, parents, and others
A one- or two-day visit by a two-member team to understand the school...

- Its vision, mission, schoolwide learner outcomes
- Its program and operations based upon the ACS WASC criteria.
Affiliation Categories

Candidacy

Initial Accreditation

Denial
Affiliation Categories: Candidacy

A school ...

- Is progressing toward, but does not assume accreditation
- Is not yet ready for the full evaluation based on the ACS WASC criteria
- Provides evidence that sound planning exists with resources to implement these plans within a reasonable time
- Submits an annual progress report to ACS WASC on recommendations integrated into an action plan left by initial visiting team
- Completes a self-study and undertakes a full accreditation visit by the third year of candidacy
A school...

- Meets the organization and support criteria for full accreditation
- Has a history and support system that indicates that a high quality program can be sustained into the foreseeable future
- Completes a self-study and undertakes a full accreditation visit by the third year of initial accreditation
Affiliation Categories: Denial

A school does not fully meet ACS WASC criteria for affiliation

Note: A school may wish to re-apply after deficiencies have been remedied.
Initial Visit Procedures: Online Materials

- Online Materials (www.acswasc.org)
  - Steps for ACS WASC Affiliation
  - Affiliation Form
  - Conditions of Eligibility
  - Initial Visit Procedures Manual

- Materials sent from ACS WASC office
  - School Description
Initial Visit Procedures

- Submit affiliation form
- Pay $160 non-refundable fee
- (Staff will review and send detailed school description; additional information is available on the website)
Initial Visit Procedures

- Complete and submit initial visit application/school description by deadline
- Work with appointed Visiting Committee chair on date
- Pay invoice for initial visit ($610)
- Work with assigned Visiting Committee chair on schedule of day
- Prepare documentation for review by Visiting Committee prior to and during visit
Initial Visit School Description

• Part I: Identifying Data

• Part II: School (Student/Community) Profile
  – Introductory Paragraph(s)
  – School Description
  – Student Demographic Data
  – Analyzed and Interpreted Student Achievement Data
  – Student Follow-up
Types of Data

Examples:

Ethnicity or Nationality
English proficiency
Gender/age mix
Special Populations
Mobility of students
Types of Data

Examples:

- Achievement
  - College SAT, Advanced Placement
  - CST
  - API, AYP
  - CELDT
  - SAT 10

- Post Graduation Data (University entrance)
Part III: The Criteria

Use Rubrics (See the Initial Visit Procedures Manual)
Initial Visit School Description

• Part III: The Criteria, School Purpose and Schoolwide Learner Outcomes

  – Respond to questions for each criterion
  – Provide documentation
“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 nonverbal techniques to communicate accurately with others
- Using verbal language to communicate clearly when giving presentations to groups or talking with other individuals
- Exchanging information when working in a cooperative group.
Initial Visit School Description

• Part IV: School Description
  – Major Achievements/Accomplishments of students, staff and school
  – Major School Needs, focusing on student achievement
The Initial Visit: Learning about School

Are students learning?
Are systems and operations supporting learning?
The schedule includes:

• Dialogue with all stakeholders
• Observation of students involved in the program
• Review of further documentation (view as much as possible prior to visit)
• Initial visiting committee report with recommendations
Documents

For example...

- Student work
- Handbooks
- Curriculum documents
- Recruiting brochures
Initial Visiting Committee Report

• Introduction (brief summary from Part I & II — can use excerpts from the School Description)
• Categories A–D or E and other areas
  – Selected statements from the school application (optional)
  – Visiting Committee comments
• Schoolwide Areas of Strength
• Critical Areas for Follow-up
Part II: ACS WASC Justification and Recommendation

• Status Recommendation (rating based on rubrics)
  ✓ Meets standard for initial accreditation
  ✓ Meets standard for candidacy
  ✓ Does not meet standard

• Justification Statement for Status
  A brief narrative — rationale for recommendation
Alignment of Findings to ACS WASC Criteria
ACS WASC Commission action

School addresses initial visit recommendations

School begins and completes self-study/full visit within 2–3 years of candidacy
Follow-up from Initial Visit

- Implementation of recommendations that have been integrated into the schoolwide action plan
- Update of Student/Community Profile
- Refinement of schoolwide learner outcomes
Follow-up from Initial Visit

- Preparation of annual progress report on school’s action plan, including the progress on the critical areas for follow-up left within the initial Visiting Committee report (candidate schools submit by June 1\textsuperscript{st} of the following year)

- Pre-planning and preparation for first self-study
  - ACS WASC Self-Study Training: 18 months from scheduled visit (e.g., November 2016, March 2017, September 2017 for a 2018 spring visit)
ACS WASC Accreditation Cycle

Focus on Learning

Follow-up

Reassess

Assess

Self-Study

Implement

Visit

Plan
For 20 years, the ACS WASC FOL process has asked schools two questions:

1. How do you know that all students are achieving...
   - schoolwide learner outcomes
   - essential core knowledge and skills?

2. Are you doing everything possible to support students being global citizens?
Self-Study = Putting Together A Puzzle
Summary: Focus on Learning Self-Study Process

**What?**

What is the ideal based upon…?

- Vision, Mission, Schoolwide Learner Outcomes
- ACS WASC criteria and indicators
- Curricular standards

**So What?**

What currently exists?
How effective is it?

**Now What?**

What and how will we modify?
What should be in the schoolwide action plan?
Self-Study Committees

Leadership Team
Plans & guides

Focus Groups
Criteria & student work

Stakeholder Groups
Student work & criteria
ACS WASC Criteria Categories

- Organization for Student Learning
- How Students Learn
- What Students Learn
- How Assessment Is Used
- Support for Student/Personal and Academic Growth
- Resource Management and Allocation

Focus on Student Learning
Sample ACS WASC Criterion: Instruction–How Students Learn

Criterion:

To what extent does the professional staff...

• Design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students at a high level of learning consistent with the school’s purpose and schoolwide learner outcomes?

Sample Indicator

— Students working and their work demonstrate critical, creative thinking, problem solving, knowledge attainment, and application skills.
To what extent...

Do teachers and students use assessment results to modify the ongoing learning and teaching process?
Focus Groups use ACS WASC Criteria and Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are the criteria concepts?</th>
<th>What evidence is needed for analysis?</th>
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Gathering and Analyzing Data/Information
Types of Data/Evidence for Self-Study

- Demographic
- Outcome
- Process/Perception
Self-Study Process: The “So What” Question? What currently exists? How effective?
Self-Study Process and Product

**Process**
- Home Groups
- Leadership Team
- Focus Groups

**Product**
- Analytical response to criteria
- Evidence
- Strengths
- Key areas for follow-up

Professional knowledge
Data
Observations
Surveys/interviews
Student work
Documents
Self-Study: Schoolwide Action Plan
Important School Questions about the Plan

Through implementing the plan, what will be different for students as global citizens?

— One year from now?
— Two years from now?
— Three years from now?
ACS WASC Accreditation Cycle

Focus on Learning
Where is the school now?
Where’s it going?
Does it have a good roadmap?
The Visit by Fellow Educators: Purpose

Based on ACS WASC criteria, school’s purpose and schoolwide learner outcomes and self-study, the Visiting Committee (VC)*...

- Provides insight about student learning and school program
  - Validates school program
  - Celebrates school strengths
  - Provides recommendations on growth areas

* Visiting Committee chair/members: team size based on school size, spends a week at school
The Visit by Fellow Educators: Purpose

- Prepares a written report for the school and the Commission
- Recommends an accreditation status
- Commission takes action on status:
  - ✓ Six years (mid-cycle report and possibly a one- or two-day visit)
  - ✓ Probation: (one or two years)
  - ✓ Denial or Withheld
To what extent is the school demonstrating quality student achievement/improvement?

1. Meeting the ACS WASC criteria and indicators
2. Clear globally minded purpose and schoolwide learner outcomes
3. Quality processes to analyze student achievement
4. Action plan aligned to areas of greatest need
5. Capacity to implement/monitor action plan
6. Total involvement and collaboration
7. Use of prior accreditation findings
ACS WASC Accreditation Cycle

Focus on Learning
The Follow-Up: After Visit

The school

• Revises the schoolwide Action Plan
  – Includes recommendations from the Visiting Committee
  – Submits the Action Plan to ACS WASC

• Annually reviews progress on Action Plan based on Schoolwide Learner Outcomes — Global Competencies

• Revises the Action Plan as needed

• Submits annual progress report to ACS WASC

• Has periodic visit from ACS WASC
ACS WASC 6-Year Accreditation Cycle

Focus on Learning
ACS WASC Focus on Learning

A Powerful Change Process

Focusing Schools on Global Competencies
Focus on Learning: A Powerful Change Process

The Foundation
What do want students to know, understand and be able to do to become Global Citizens?

Schoolwide Learner Outcomes = Global Competencies
We Are Student Centered