



Volunteering: Serving on a WASC Visiting Committee



WASC Overview

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), one of six regional accrediting associations in the United States, is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and is known worldwide. WASC provides assistance to schools in California, Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, and East Asia, currently serving over 4,000 schools.

WASC's philosophy centers upon three beliefs: a school's goal is successful student learning; each school has a clear purpose and schoolwide student goals; and a school engages in external and internal evaluations as part of ongoing school improvement to support high-quality student learning.

In addition to its official title, WASC also stands for: *"We Are Student-Centered."*

Accreditation is integral to a school's perpetual cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, and monitoring. The WASC accreditation process fosters excellence in elementary, secondary, and adult education by encouraging school improvement. WASC accreditation recognizes schools that meet an acceptable level of quality, in accordance with established, research-based WASC criteria.

Visiting Committees

WASC accreditation visits range from one-day initial visits to three- or four-and-½ day full self-study reviews.

Visiting committees are composed of two to eight members, one of whom is the chairperson. A committee is comprised of educators representing a wide range of educational experience and expertise. Training workshops are provided and new members work closely with experienced chairs.

Visiting team members review the WASC criteria and study reports from the school in preparation for the visit. During the visit, the team observes the school in operation and other evidence; reviews student performance data; observes students engaged in learning; and dialogues individually and collectively with administrators, teachers, students, and other stakeholders. The visiting team then prepares a report outlining the team's findings for the school and WASC Commission.

Why Serve?

- Learn about a variety of educational strategies, approaches, and practices
- Observe programs in action
- Develop and cultivate new professional friends
- Provide insights and reflections as a fellow educator
- Work together to ensure the high achievement of all learners
- Demonstrate one's professional commitment to quality education
- Give back to the educational community

Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC

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WASC accreditation visits rely entirely on volunteers. Your support is greatly appreciated.

"Serving as a visiting team member is by far the best professional development opportunity available in education today. Taking the time to see a school from all facets does so much for the perspective that we bring back to our own sites."

Shawn Marshall, WASC VC Member
Riverside, CA

Please contact our office or visit the WASC website: www.acswasc.org for further information.

The WASC Volunteer Data Sheet can be found on the WASC website at www.acswasc.org/vc_volunteering.htm

