



## Accrediting Commission for Schools Western Association of Schools and Colleges

### ACS WASC Reimbursement Policy School Guidelines

Per the ACS WASC reimbursement policy, it is the responsibility of visited schools in California to reimburse ACS WASC visiting committee members directly for expenses associated with full self-study visits (including the one-day chair previsit): transportation, lodging, food, and other materials not directly provided by the visited school.

ACS WASC encourages each school to establish procedures with their districts or governing agencies that enable on-site reimbursement or guarantee a process that provides reimbursements to visiting committee members within two weeks following an ACS WASC self-study visit. ACS WASC will directly reimburse members who have not received reimbursement from the visited school four weeks following the visit; the school will then be invoiced for these expenses plus a 15% administrative fee.

Schools might want to consider the following suggestions to facilitate this policy. ACS WASC visits are staffed by a group of fellow educators who are volunteering their time. We would like to ensure that they do not incur any financial hardships or out-of-pocket expenditures that are not quickly reimbursed while serving on an ACS WASC visiting team. Schools can reimburse ACS WASC visiting committee members directly without the need for any type of consulting agreement or consultant contract forms (1099 forms). Both the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) and the School Services of California have opined that independent contractor/consultant agreements are unnecessary for educators engaged in ACS WASC visits, where only reimbursements of actual costs associated with visits are involved.

**Accommodations** — Visiting committee chairs are required to conduct previsits for full self-study visits. This would be the appropriate time to discuss upcoming travel arrangements with the school. We encourage chairs to work with the school to secure appropriate accommodations that are within a reasonable distance to the school. The school, in collaboration with the visiting committee chair, should consider costs in the selection of appropriate hotel or motel arrangements. Hotels which include breakfast might be a consideration. We anticipate that most schools will pre-pay hotel costs for the visiting teams.

**Meals** — Schools should work with the chair during the previsit to identify viable options for restaurants on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday nights. Many schools have relationships with local restaurants that might result in reduced rates and/or direct billing to the school. Lunches on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday should be provided at the school in most cases. Cafeteria service is usually quite acceptable and catering special meals while at the school is discouraged.

**Transportation** — Schools will reimburse visiting committee members for the mileage traveled in the course of the visit. In previous years, ACS WASC has used the standard mileage rate set by the Federal Government, currently set at 53.5 cents/mile for 2017, for reimbursement. This amount is subject to change and the current amount can be found on the IRS website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). Contact your district or governing board for local regulations regarding mileage reimbursement rates.

**Visit Materials, Computers, Meeting Rooms, Supplies, etc.** — Materials associated with the visit (paper supplies, reprographic services, pencils, markers, etc.) should be provided to the team by the visited school. Although many visiting team members bring their own personal laptop computers to the visit, adequate computer equipment should be provided by the school if requested. Specifics regarding required equipment and materials should be reviewed with the visiting team chair well in advance of the actual visit. The use of special meeting rooms in hotels is discouraged; teams should be allowed to remain at the school to do group work.