



Accrediting Commission for Schools Western Association of Schools and Colleges

ACS WASC SPECIAL VISIT PROCEDURES SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of the Special Visit is to determine the school's progress in addressing the critical areas for follow-up identified by the previous visiting committee that have been integrated into the schoolwide action plan.

The ACS WASC Special Visit is a one- or two-day visit. The Special Visit visiting committee is comprised of a chairperson and an additional member from the previous visit when available. **The chairperson will contact the principal to establish a date for the visit.** Once the date has been established, the chairperson should provide the date information to the ACS WASC Office. The visit must take place before the end of the fourth year of the school's six-year accreditation cycle.

The school works closely with the visiting committee chairperson in planning the schedule for the visit and the principal is responsible for all logistical arrangements, such as a workroom, etc. The visiting committee expenses are submitted to the ACS WASC office for reimbursement. The school should make certain that all necessary paperwork is submitted in a timely fashion.

Preparation of the School's Progress Report

Schools required to have a Special Visit must prepare a progress report prior to the visit. The report should address the unresolved critical areas for follow-up noted in the mid-cycle visiting committee report. The progress report should be completed and submitted **no later than six weeks prior to the visit.**

The progress report should be a concise report detailing the progress made on the unresolved or ongoing areas of concern. A description of any significant developments since the last visit and the impact these developments have had on the school or specific curricular programs should be included. All school stakeholders and shareholders should review the report prior to the submission of the report to ACS WASC. A copy of the school's updated student/community profile and summary and the current schoolwide action plan should also be included.

All stakeholders, including the Governing Board, should review and approve the report prior to the visit.

Progress Report Format

The school's progress report format is as follows:

I. Student/Community Profile Data

Include the following:

- An updated student/community profile that includes the following: a brief, general description of the school and its programs; the school's vision, mission, and learner outcomes; student and faculty/staff demographics; and student achievement data for a three-year period.
- An updated summary of data with implications, identified critical learner needs, and important questions for staff discussion.

→ **Note:** Use the current student/community profile and summary that has been updated annually since the last full visit and other annual progress reports. (See Task 1 of the Focus on Learning manual.)

II. Significant School Changes and Developments

- Include a description of any significant changes and/or developments, i.e., program additions since the last full visit, changes in student enrollment, staffing changes.
- Describe the impact these changes and/or developments have had on the school and/or specific curricular programs.

III. Ongoing School Improvement

- Describe the process of engagement of all stakeholders in review of the student achievement data and the implementation and monitoring of the schoolwide action plan.
- Describe the process used to prepare the progress report.

IV. Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up/Schoolwide Action Plan

- Provide analytical comments on the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section referencing the critical areas for follow-up addressed through each section; provide supporting evidence, including how each area has impacted student achievement.
- If any critical areas for follow-up were not included in the school's action plan, indicate what actions have been taken to address this issue and provide supporting evidence, including the impact on student achievement.
- **Note:** The school's schoolwide action plan should have incorporated all the critical areas of follow-up or major recommendations that were stated in the last self-study visiting committee report.

V. Schoolwide Action Plan Refinements

- Comment on the refinements made to the single schoolwide action plan since the last full self-study visit to reflect schoolwide progress and/or newly identified issues.
- Include a copy of the school's latest updated schoolwide action plan.

The progress report template can be found on the ACS WASC website.

Distribution of the School's Progress Report

1. **No later than six weeks** prior to the visit, the school sends a copy of the progress report to each member of the visiting committee with additional materials, such as the current action plan. *It is assumed that annually the school has modified or refined the action plan based on progress noted.*
2. **No later than six weeks prior to the visit**, the school submits a copy of the progress report to ACS WASC in a single pdf or Word document using the Document Upload link on the top navigation bar of the ACS WASC website: www.acswasc.org/document-upload/.

ACS WASC SPECIAL VISIT VISITING COMMITTEE INSTRUCTIONS

Visiting Committee Guidelines

1. The school should provide the following materials to the visiting committee:
 - a. The ACS WASC visiting committee report from the previous mid-cycle visit
 - b. The current schoolwide action plan
 - c. The school's progress report, to be received **no later than six weeks** prior to the visit.
2. The visiting committee reviews these materials and the school's follow-up process in response to the previous ACS WASC visiting committee report. The visiting committee will review progress made and significant developments at the school with the principal and/or Leadership Team.
3. The visit date is mutually determined by the chairperson and the school. The chairperson should notify the ACS WASC Office of the visit date. Previsits are not required and overnight hotel stays are not associated with one-day visits.
4. The visiting committee's expense vouchers should be submitted to the ACS WASC Burlingame Office for reimbursement following the visit.

Visiting Committee Report Format

Immediately following the visit, the visiting committee will prepare its report detailing the areas of strength and critical areas for follow-up, with regard to progress made on the action plan.

The visiting committee report format is as follows:

I. Introduction

- General comments about the school, its setting, and the school's analysis of student achievement data.
- Include a description of any significant changes and/or developments, i.e., program additions since the last full visit, changes in student enrollment, staffing changes.
- Describe the impact these changes and/or developments have had on the school and/or specific curricular programs.
- Briefly comment on the school's follow-up process. Include a description of the committee that has been responsible for overseeing the progress of the school's action plan and the preparation for the visit.
- Describe the process used to prepare the progress report.

II. Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up/Schoolwide Action Plan

- Provide an analytical summary about the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section referencing the critical areas for follow-up addressed through each section.
- Note evidence supporting the progress made and the impact made on student achievement.
- If any critical areas for follow-up were not included in the school's action plan, indicate what actions have been taken to address these issue(s) and include supporting evidence.

➔ **Note:** *The school's schoolwide action plan should have incorporated all the critical areas of follow-up or major recommendations that were stated in the last visiting committee report.*

III. Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations:

- Comment on significant progress the school has made in responding to the critical areas for follow-up and in carrying out the related action plan.

Recommendations:

- Comment on any critical areas for follow-up/action plan sections that have not yet been completely addressed, if applicable.
- Identify any new areas of concerns, if applicable.

Visiting committee materials can be found on the ACS WASC website.

Confidential Summary Statement

The chairperson submits a confidential summary statement which includes a brief summary statement to ACS WASC regarding the progress made on the schoolwide critical areas for follow-up and/or major recommendations.

The committee will recommend one of the following options:

1. Reaffirm accreditation for the remainder of the six-year cycle, this indicates that the school has made sufficient progress and has the capacity to complete the remainder of the accreditation cycle in good standing
2. Accreditation status withheld.

Distribution of the Visiting Committee Materials

1. A copy of the visiting committee report should be sent to the school **no later than ten days following the visit**.
2. The visiting committee report and the confidential recommendation and summary statement should be sent to ACS WASC **no later than ten days following the visit** using the Document Upload link on the top navigation bar of the ACS WASC website: www.acswasc.org/document-upload/. The confidential recommendation and summary statement are **not** to be shared with the school.

Please contact us with any questions.