



# Accrediting Commission for Schools Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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## ACS WASC SPECIAL VISIT PROCEDURES

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 Office will appoint two members of the original Visiting Committee (when available) to serve as the Special Visit Committee.

Special Visits usually occur during the spring of the scheduled year. After the Special Visit chair and committee member are appointed by the ACS WASC office, the chair will contact the school principal to establish a date for the visit.

### SPECIAL VISIT REPORT GUIDELINES

The Special Visit Report addresses the critical areas for follow-up (within each criteria category section) identified in the last Visiting Committee Report.

The Special Visit Report is prepared by a follow-up committee that has been coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the schoolwide plan that resulted from the last full self-study. The goals and action steps of this plan correspond to the visiting committee recommendations as well as the school's identified priority areas for improvement. In the compilation of this report, the administrators and faculty members composing this follow-up committee will need to work closely with all staff and other school community members.

The following format is suggested for the Special Visit Report:

#### I. Introduction

- A. A general description of the school, its setting, and the population it serves.
- B. A description of the follow-up process indicating the composition of the committee that prepared the report, how the members were selected, and how the committee meets the definition of being "representative."
- C. Significant developments at the school since the last visit that had an overall affect on the school.

#### II. Body

Following the organizational pattern of the original Visiting Committee Report, section by section, list each of the identified areas for growth and state the progress that has been made, especially with respect to student learning. Comment on how these growth areas are part of the school's action plan. If done in this manner, this Special Visit Report may be updated and used as a part of the next full evaluation report of the school.

The special visit report should be completed and submitted to the appropriate personnel no later than six weeks prior to the visit; this should provide quality preparation time for the Special Visit Committee.

1. Share the final report with the entire school staff as part of the ongoing follow-up.
2. **No later than six weeks prior to the visit**, the school sends the special visit report to the members of the Special Visit Committee.
3. **No later than six weeks prior to the visit**, the school submits a copy of the special visit 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/](http://www.acswasc.org/document-upload/).

## **SPECIAL VISIT COMMITTEE GUIDELINES**

Previsit Preparation:

1. The chair contacts the school and requests a copy of the original visiting committee report (if needed) and the schoolwide action plan that was updated by the school following the full self-study visit.
2. The chair and principal discuss what has occurred since the last visit, such as school changes and ongoing follow-up.
3. The chair utilizes the original report as a reference to begin planning the one-day visit. The identified areas for growth will guide in determining areas of focus during the visit.
4. The chair and the principal determine how to use time most productively during the visit and establish a schedule. This may involve meetings with staff, students, parents, district representatives, and other school community members and classroom visits.
5. Upon receipt and analysis of the school's special visit report, the chair finalizes the schedule for the Special Visit.
6. The chair communicates all information to the other member of the Special Visit Committee.

Immediately following the Special Visit, the Special Visit Committee will prepare a brief report of findings along with a short confidential justification statement.

The following format is suggested for the special visit committee report:

- I. **Introduction** (½ to 1 page)
  - A. General comments about the school and its setting
  - B. Significant changes or developments that have affected the school since the full visit

**II. Follow-up Process** (½ to 1 page)

Briefly comment upon the school's process for follow-up, including the capacity of the school to monitor implementation and accomplishment of the areas for improvement as recommended by the previous visiting committee.

**III. School's Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up** (2 to 4 pages but more may be needed)

- A. For each of the schoolwide areas for critical follow-up, provide a succinct summary of the school's progress since the full visit and any observable impact on student learning.
- B. Identify and note any areas that need to be given priority for the school's ongoing improvement.
- C. Report on the school's success generally in addressing critical areas for follow-up and carrying out its action plan.

**IV. Commendations Related to Progress** (½ to 1 page)

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

**Distribution of the Visiting Committee Materials**

- 1. A copy of the special visit 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 submitted 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/](http://www.acswasc.org/document-upload/). The confidential recommendation and summary statement are **not** to be shared with the school.