

# Visiting Committee Member Checklist

## Previsit Preparation

- \_\_\_1. Receive the first letter from the visiting committee chairperson that addresses:
  - a. Requests for preferred areas of coverage during the visit
  - b. Training sessions schedule reminders
  - c. The review of accreditation materials.
- \_\_\_2. Attend ACS WASC member training.
- \_\_\_3. Study the school description, the *ACS WASC/NLSA Focus on Learning* manual, and the reference cards.
- \_\_\_4. Become aware of the outcomes of the self-study followed by the school:
  - The involvement and collaboration of all staff and other stakeholders to support student achievement
  - The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards
  - The analysis of data about students and student achievement
  - The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and ACS WASC/NLSA criteria
  - The alignment of a long-range action plan to the school's areas of need; the capacity to implement and monitor the accomplishment of the plan.
- \_\_\_5. Review the ACS WASC/NLSA criteria, the criteria guide questions, suggested evidence to examine, appropriate academic standards, and educational references.
- \_\_\_6. Receive additional instructions from chairperson, including:
  - a. Writing assignments
  - b. Review of the criteria as the **self-study report is analyzed**
  - c. Members will be asked to provide questions and comments for all sections of the report on the previsit preparation worksheet; members will also be asked to write tentative narrative statements for assigned sections of the school report; the chair should receive these prior to the initial team meeting in order to compile a tentative visiting committee report (Many chairs will be using Google Drive for the previsit preparation worksheets and the draft visiting committee report)
  - d. Visit schedule.
- \_\_\_7. After receiving the self-study report, complete the previsit preparation:
  - a. Review the criteria with respect to the analysis of the self-study report; study other pertinent materials (e.g., academic standards)
  - b. Compare the school's findings to the concepts of the criteria, the critical learner needs, and the schoolwide learner outcomes; critique the schoolwide action plan.

To what extent:

- Do the school’s findings and supporting evidence provide a sound basis for determining the effectiveness of the school programs based on the criteria concepts?
  - Was the analysis of the school program done in relation to the critical learner needs, the schoolwide learner outcomes, the academic standards, and the concepts of the criteria?
  - Does the schoolwide action plan address the major identified growth areas and enhance the learning of all students as identified in the student/community profile?
  - Are the critical learner needs and the schoolwide learner outcomes being addressed through the action plan?
  - Is the implementation of a standards-based system being addressed through the action plan?
  - Has the school integrated other initiatives to create one “umbrella” schoolwide action plan?
  - Is the action plan feasible and realistic? Are resources considered for each action plan section?
  - Do the ways of assessing progress include the analysis of student learning?
  - Is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and systemwide?
  - Is there a sound follow-up process that will be used to monitor the accomplishment of the action plan?
- c. Write tentative narrative statements in response to the criteria including the relationship of the concepts of the criteria/indicators to the schoolwide learner outcomes and critical learner needs. Include questions regarding issues, concerns, clarifications and evidence that should be pursued during the visit. **Send these to visiting committee chair prior to the visit.**

\_\_\_8. Ensure that the chair has received in a timely manner all previsit preparation questions and comments for the entire self-study report and the tentative narrative statements for the assigned sections of the report.

\_\_\_9. Receive the final communication from the chairperson that:

- a. Offers further assistance and clarification of tasks based on the school schedule
- b. Confirms the initial meeting time and visit logistics
- c. Reviews how reimbursable expenses are to be handled.

\_\_\_10. Bring the following materials to the visit:

- a. *ACS WASC/NLSA Focus on Learning* manual
- b. Reference cards
- c. Self-study report
- d. All notes
- e. Credit card or cash to cover reimbursable expenses.

\_\_\_11. Arrive on time for the initial meeting and have no other commitments during the visit.

**The Visit:      How Do We Know Students Are Learning?  
                         What Is The Actual Program For Students?**

\_\_\_1. Demonstrate an interest in the school's welfare and express a desire to be helpful. Establish a rapport with the staff.

\_\_\_2. Use the concepts of the ACS WASC/NLSA criteria as a comparison base throughout entire visit.

\_\_\_3. Look at the quality of the program experienced by students and evidence of successful student learning — the degree to which the schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards are being accomplished.

\_\_\_4. Look for evidence of an ongoing process for school improvement.

\_\_\_5. Let the program unfold: don't prejudge. Validate, verify, and document. Be aware of personal biases that can influence observations.

\_\_\_6. Structure the gathering of evidence (class/program, observations, interviews, examination of student work and other information, dialogue with Home Groups) so the needed appropriate information is obtained.

\_\_\_7. Assure teachers that classroom visits are not evaluative but are planned to observe the general instructional atmosphere and climate of the school.

\_\_\_8. Frame open-ended questions to all school committee members and individuals to elicit information without reflecting a value judgment.

\_\_\_9. Allow adequate time for responses and give appropriate feedback to responses to questions.

\_\_\_10. Concentrate on being a good listener. Be aware of nonverbal feedback.

\_\_\_11. Meet and lead discussions with the school self-study committees that are pertinent to your assigned areas of writing responsibility.

➔ **Note:** Time is limited, so don't overemphasize particular concerns. The goal is to clarify information already in the self-study report and secure information not yet provided.

\_\_\_12. Don't allow pressure groups or individuals to distract you from the main task and the schedule.

\_\_\_13. Make every effort to avoid involvement in school issues that are not pertinent to the self-study and visit.

- \_\_\_14. Work cooperatively with all other visiting committee members as findings are discussed and decisions made.
- \_\_\_15. Write quality analytical responses according to the suggested guidelines. Make sure they reflect the important concepts of the criteria and indicators and are supported by evidence.
- \_\_\_16. Give feedback to all staff, noting the regular meetings with the Leadership Team.
- \_\_\_17. Meet daily with the Leadership Team to present and thoroughly discuss the synthesis of the concepts of the criteria, the self-study report, and the findings during the visit, as reflected in the draft visiting committee report. Continually, discuss the school's next steps as outlined in the proposed schoolwide action plan.
- \_\_\_18. Meet with other visiting committee members to investigate any issues or questions raised during the Leadership Team meeting.
- \_\_\_19. Make necessary visiting committee report modifications and finalize the report.
- \_\_\_20. Individually review each ACS WASC accreditation status factor. Individually make decisions regarding the quality of the school's educational program with respect to the ACS WASC/NLSA criteria and the other factors impacting the accreditation status.
- \_\_\_21. Participate in the visiting committee discussion of the Accreditation Status Recommendation with respect to the ACS WASC/NLSA criteria categories and all findings.
- \_\_\_22. Assist the chair in preparing the confidential visiting committee "Documentation and Justification Statement" for the Commission ensuring that the **correlation is evident** between the recommended status and the visiting committee report.
- \_\_\_23. Complete the reimbursement form and submit to the chair for submission to the school for reimbursement. (Keep a copy of all forms and receipts.)
- \_\_\_24. Complete and submit the chair evaluation form.
- \_\_\_25. Participate in the presentation of the findings to the entire staff. The recommended accreditation status is confidential; do not imply the recommended accreditation status.
- \_\_\_26. Support and encourage the school in its ongoing school improvement process.