AWSNA does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, medical condition, marital status, citizenship status, military service status, or other basis protected by law in staffing, policies, practices, or programs.
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I. Introduction

A school, in order to be recognized as an accredited Waldorf school, must demonstrate congruence with its own stated mission, the *AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools*, and the *AWSNA Policies and Practices for Waldorf Schools*.

A. What is Accreditation?

The accreditation process is a qualitative assessment of a school’s congruence between its stated mission, the *AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools*, and the *AWSNA Policies and Practices for Waldorf Schools*. Congruence is determined by observation, interviews, and document review.

To become accredited, schools are expected to demonstrate congruence as described above through a process that involves self-study (reflection) and peer review. The period of self-study culminates in a self-study report. Peer review is the process by which congruence is evaluated.

The self-study and its material outcome, the report, are conducted with participation by all constituent groups in the school in Year 2 of the accreditation cycle. As outlined below, the self-study process is meant to bring awareness, understanding, and clarity to all members of the school community regarding the identity and mission of the school; to affirm that the school’s policies and practices support this mission; and to determine congruence with the *AWSNA Principles for Waldorf schools* and the *AWSNA Policies and Practices for Waldorf Schools*.

An important service AWSNA provides is the process of accreditation for its member schools as a tool to guide their progress toward an ideal of educational excellence. In providing this process, the Association in no way limits, but rather strives to preserve the freedom of each individual school to practice within the principles for Waldorf schools.

AWSNA accreditation is a structured, cyclical process of self-study, peer review, and follow-up. The AWSNA accreditation process includes all aspects of school life, including Waldorf principles, independence and mission, self-reflection, students and families, faculty and staff, community, educational programs, decision-making, resources, health and safety, and legality. The goal is to strengthen Waldorf schools while maintaining the true and complete independence of each school.

In both philosophy and practice, the focus of the AWSNA accreditation process is on the development and nurturing of excellence. The principal objectives are to provide a stimulus for excellence, help the school assess its strengths and weaknesses, and help the school confirm the validity of its priorities and planning for growth.

Member schools that complete this process successfully may use the term "Accredited by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America."

AWSNA itself is an accredited member of the National Council for Private School Accreditation.
B. Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of this manual is to guide schools through the process of accreditation, including both initial accreditation and renewal. Additional information may be found on the AWSNA website, in the member portal, at www.waldorfeducation.org. If a school has additional questions, it is invited to contact the AWSNA director of accreditation at accreditation@awsna.org.

Section II of this manual presents an overview of the process, and Section III presents a year-by-year plan for the entire accreditation cycle.

Schools that are planning a joint process leading to accreditation with both AWSNA and another agency should also look at Section IV.

A separate manual for Visiting Team Members is available in the Accreditation section of the member portal.
II. Overview of Accreditation Criteria and Process

The member schools of AWSNA have adopted seven *AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools* and ten *AWSNA Policies and Practices for Waldorf Schools* that form the basis of the decision to accredit.

*AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools*: These principles articulate the most important values that inform the policies and practices of Waldorf schools in North America. The school completes a self-study process based on these principles whereby the school articulates how these principles are living, how they are the basis of innovation, and how the school is addressing any compromises to these principles.

A. AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools

1. **The image of the human being as a spiritual being informs every aspect of the school.**
   Waldorf schools work actively with insights from Rudolf Steiner about the incarnating human being. One core insight is that the human being is a threefold being of body, soul, and spirit. Waldorf Education enlivens the physical, emotional, intellectual, social, artistic, and spiritual capacities of the human being as the individual moves through the phases of this life.

2. **Waldorf schools foster social renewal by cultivating human capacities in service to the individual and society.**
   Waldorf schools foster development so that throughout life, individuals are motivated to serve humanity with strength of will, depth of feeling, clarity of thought, and the ability to work with others. The educational program is designed to strengthen these fundamental human capacities in our students.

3. **Anthroposophical understanding of child development guides the educational program.**
   Waldorf schools work with the gradual development of the human being from child to adult. This development follows an archetypal sequence of three seven-year phases. During this time, the soul and spirit progressively take hold of the physical body. Each child’s development is a unique expression of the human archetype. Each phase has characteristic physical, emotional, and intellectual dimensions.

   The educational program is developed out of this understanding. Core components of the educational program include the student-teacher relationship; the artistic approach; working from experience to concept; working from whole to parts; use of rhythm and repetition; and observation as the foundation for assessment. Each approach is tailored to meet the students in each phase of child development.
Thus it is essential that teachers have formal preparation in Waldorf pedagogy or are engaged in such preparation.

4. **Waldorf schools support freedom in teaching within the context of the school’s shared agreements.**
   The educational program of each Waldorf school is founded on Rudolf Steiner’s insights about the growing child, informed by the teachers’ ongoing study of anthroposophy and their professional development in Waldorf Education.

   The faculty of the school works collaboratively and cooperatively to develop, refine, and periodically review the educational program. Individual teachers work creatively with curricular, pedagogical, and assessment components of the program out of freedom and in a way that serves their individual students, the class as a whole, and the school community. This work reflects and respects the shared educational understandings and agreements of the faculty.

5. **The conscious development of human relationships fosters individual and community health.**
   Enduring human relationships between students and their teachers and between the children themselves are at the heart of Waldorf Education. The teacher’s task is to work with the developing individuality of each student and with each class as a whole, within the context of the entire school. These relationships gain in depth and stability when they are cultivated over multiple years.

   Healthy human relationships with and among parents and colleagues are essential to the wellbeing of the school. Members of the community are invited to join in developing meaningful, collaborative, transparent forms for working together. Each individual’s self-development is encouraged since it is key to the wellbeing of the whole.

6. **Spiritual development in support of professional growth is an ongoing activity for the faculty, staff, and board.**
   Members of the faculty, staff, and board work in an ongoing way to cultivate their spiritual development with the help of anthroposophical and other study. Waldorf schools create opportunities for shared educational study, artistic activity, mentoring, and research to further this growth and development in service to the students.

7. **Collaboration and shared responsibility provide the foundations of school leadership and governance.**
   Waldorf schools are self-administered. This work is strengthened by cultivating a shared anthroposophical understanding of social interaction. Faculty, staff, and the board share responsibility for guiding and leading the school in the following manner:

   a) The educational program is developed by the faculty under the guidance of the pedagogical leadership of the school.
b) Administrative activities further the educational program.

c) The board works strategically to enable legal and financial health in order to realize the mission and vision of the school.

Governance of the school is structured and implemented in a manner that both cultivates collaboration and is effective.

B. AWSNA Policies and Practices for Waldorf Schools

1. **Independence.** The school is established as a “not for profit” entity, or equivalent in Mexico and Canada, with an organizational structure that safeguards the integrity of its independence. Decisions to establish relationships with outside entities that affect the school’s purpose, programs, governance, personnel, and community are made only after fully conscious discussion with appropriate members of the school community.

2. **Responsible Self-Reflection.** The school is committed to a seven-year\(^1\) cycle of self-study and peer review. It is also committed to implementing the self-identified priorities for growth and change that emerge during the self-study process and the recommendations made by the visiting team.

3. **Support for Students and Families.** The school is committed to supporting students and their families, and establishes and implements documented policies and practices that demonstrate this in the following areas:

   a) Application and acceptance
   b) Assessment, support, supervision
   c) Graduation requirements, as applicable
   d) Behavioral agreements and expectations, for students and families/adults, including communication protocol
   e) Contracts, including refund policy
   f) Tuition and tuition assistance, and as appropriate, financial accessibility
   g) Family/adult commitments, including volunteerism and parent education
   h) Record-keeping
   i) Suspension, dismissal
   j) Grievances, for students and families/adults
   k) Conflict resolution, for students and families/adults

4. **Support for Faculty and Staff.** The school is committed to supporting faculty and staff, and establishes and implements documented policies and practices to demonstrate this in the following areas:

   a) Recruitment, hiring, and orientation

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\(^1\) The length of the cycle may vary depending on joint accreditation. AWSNA will work to be in alignment with cooperating agency processes.
b) Mentoring, professional development, and assessment  
c) Compensation, including benefits  
d) Professional behavior and expectations, including communication protocol  
e) Record-keeping  
f) Dismissal  
g) Grievances  
h) Conflict resolution

5. **Engaged Community.** The school is committed to developing a healthy, vibrant community in service of the school’s mission. The school consciously builds relationships with current and alumni/ae members of its community, as well as the community beyond the school. It also identifies its commitment to diversity in the school community. The school establishes and implements documented policies and procedures in the following areas:  
   a) Friend and fundraising  
   b) Community events  
   c) Alumni/ae  
   d) Diversity statement

6. **Articulated Educational Program.** The school is committed to consciously creating a clearly-described educational program. It establishes and implements documented policies and procedures to create and review the following areas:  
   a) Annual programming schedule  
   b) Curriculum  
   c) Methodology  
   d) Assessment methods  
   e) Supplementary programs

7. **Articulated Decision Making.** The school is committed to establishing and implementing a documented governance structure that defines and delineates responsibilities for each leadership position and group. The documentation includes a clear description of how these groups collaborate, communicate, and make decisions. Policies and procedures address the following areas:  
   a) Governance structure, including major areas of responsibility, authority, and accountability  
   b) Strategic planning  
   c) Crisis and risk management  
   d) Conflict of interest

8. **Sufficient Resources.** The school is committed to ensuring there are sufficient financial, human, and material resources to support the stated mission of the school. The school establishes and implements documented policies and procedures in the following areas:  
   a) Financial, facilities, and material management  
   b) Budgeting, including three- to five-year planning  
   c) Annual audit reviews
d) A full audit, occurring within two years prior to the accreditation site visit

9. **Prioritized Health and Safety Considerations.** The school is committed to the health and safety of students, colleagues, community members, and other individuals on campus. It establishes and implements documented policies and practices to ensure health and safety in the following areas:
   a) Student safety and protection, including abuse reporting
   b) Harassment prevention
   c) Emergency preparedness, including natural or human-caused emergencies
   d) Field trips
   e) Medication management, including first aid
   f) Allergy management
   g) Public health notices
   h) Visitor and volunteer screening
   i) Storage and handling of science materials and equipment

10. **Prioritized Legal Compliance.** The school is committed to being aware of and meeting all legal requirements, and adopting policies and practices that are applied equally. It establishes and implements documented policies and practices to ensure legal compliance in the following areas:
   a) Federal regulations
   b) State/provincial regulations
   c) Local regulations

*Exemptions and modifications:* If a school feels it cannot meet one or more of the above criteria (*AWSNA Principles or Policies and Practices*) they may include a request for exemption and include a justification at the time of filing the application for accreditation (initial or renewal). The request is expected to be based on specific extenuating circumstances (government or joint agency requirement, for example) and approval on a case-by-case basis will be determined by the Accreditation Review Committee. As soon as a school identifies the potential need for an exemption or modification, a request must be made in writing to the director of accreditation stating the need for the request. This request should be as far in advance of the peer review visit as possible, and a minimum of two months in advance of the visit.

C. **Process Overview and Timetable**

In general, AWSNA accreditation follows a seven-year cycle:\(^2\):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Application and orientation visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Self-study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^2\) Schools that also pursue accreditation with another agency may be on an alternate cycle ranging from six to ten years. More information can be found in the section on [Dual Accreditation](#).
Year 3 - Peer review (team visit); decision on accreditation
Year 4 - First follow-up report and action plan due; progress on all major priorities
Year 5 - Continue progress on all priorities
Year 6 - Second follow-up report due – continue progress on all priorities
Year 7 - Complete all priorities

Note: The word "year" is an approximation. For example, the actual time for a self-study may be 18 months. All accreditation terms expire on June 30, regardless of whether the team visit is in spring or fall.

General timetable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Fall Team Visits</th>
<th>Spring Team Visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Application due November 1</td>
<td>Application due May 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orientation visit in spring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-study begins after orientation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Self-study continues throughout school year and concludes in summer</td>
<td>Orientation visit in fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-study begins after orientation and continues through spring and summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Team visit in fall</td>
<td>Self-study continues through fall and concludes in winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Team visit in spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>First follow-up report and action plan due by October 15</td>
<td>First follow-up report and action plan due by March 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>No additional reporting required. *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Second follow-up report due by October 15</td>
<td>Second follow-up report due by March 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>No additional reporting required. *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The Accreditation Review Committee (ARC) may require additional reporting from an individual school as a condition of maintaining accredited status.

D. Budgetary Implications

Please share this information with the appropriate people at your school (business manager, finance committee, etc.) so these costs can be considered in the budget process.
Fees: Schools filing applications for initial accreditation or for renewal will be billed for the application fee ($200). After the orientation visit (Year 1), the school will be billed the administrative fee ($1500). Additional fees may apply if a second orientation visit is needed, or if a school otherwise has an approved postponement to the timeline.

Self-study:

- Staff: the school may choose to hire additional staff during the year of the self-study, for planning the team visit and/or for document editing.
- Report printing & postage as required for team members.

Financial audit: The school is required to have a full opinion financial audit for the fiscal year preceding the team visit. For fall team visits, if the audit report for the prior year will not available in time for the visit, the school may submit a report from two years prior.

Team leader's one-day pre-visit (2-6 months before team visit): School pays travel, lodging, meals, etc. for the visit.

Team visit: The school bears all costs of the team visit, including travel, ground transportation, lodging, and meals. There will typically be six to eight team members.

- Travel: airfare or mileage.
- Ground transportation: car/van rental, taxis, etc. May not be needed if one or more team members are able to drive to the visit, or if the school can provide drivers.
- Lodging: private room for each team member. Conference space at a hotel, which may be accomplished by reserving a suite for the team leader.
- Welcome reception: light refreshments or supper on campus Sunday following a campus tour.
- Meals and snacks: typically, breakfast at the hotel, lunch on campus, and dinner at a local restaurant. The school may choose to provide dinner on campus as well on some evenings.
- Computer equipment: consult with team leader regarding possible need for laptops, printer, and/or internet access in the team workroom during the visit.
- Honoraria: no honoraria are given to the team members or team leader.
III. The Seven Year Cycle - Year by Year

A. Year 1 - Preparation

1. Application
Schools applying for initial accreditation must have Candidate status with AWSNA, as determined by the Regional Delegates Circle. Once Candidate status has been granted, the school has 12 months to complete the application for accreditation.

To initiate the accreditation process, complete the Application for Initial Accreditation form. Email it to the accreditation office. The director of accreditation will examine it for completeness and consult with the regional representative to the Leadership Council and Accreditation Review Committee members if there is any question regarding readiness.

Applications are due May 1 or November 1. If applying by May 1, the team visit will occur a year from the following February. If applying by November 1, the team visit will occur a year from the following October.

To apply for renewal of accreditation, complete the Application for Renewal of Accreditation and email it to the accreditation office 25-32 months in advance of the expiration of the term of accreditation.

Upon receipt of the either application form (initial or renewal), the school will be billed for the application fee ($200).

A school that applies for initial accreditation or renewal of accreditation needs to be a member in good standing with the Association, including being current with dues payments and the filing of the AWSNA annual survey (DASL).

An application for initial accreditation is good for three years. If the team visit does not occur within 3 years of filing the application, an updated application must be submitted and the school will be billed $200. If a re-visit by the director of accreditation becomes necessary (because of time lapse or the need to train a new in-house coordinator or steering committee), an additional administrative fee of $1500 will apply. Note that these delays will also be reported to the AWSNA regional representative and delegates in the region to determine any impact on the school’s membership status.

2. Selection of School Accreditation Steering Committee

The next step for the school is to select a steering committee of three to five members to provide coordination and leadership for the self-study and team visit. The committee serves as project manager for the process. The members of the steering committee should be well
organized, should be able to write well, and should have sound rapport with the school community. It is helpful if the team members have varying responsibilities in the school and if one or more members have served on a visiting team and/or been involved with the school's prior self-study.

Alternatively, the school may choose to appoint an individual to serve as the on-site accreditation coordinator and manage many of the administrative details of the process. Otherwise, these tasks will be managed by the steering committee as a whole. The steering committee should meet weekly until the process is well-defined and under way, and may meet less frequently after that.

The following tasks are the responsibility of the steering committee and/or accreditation coordinator:

- Chairs and sets agendas for meetings of the steering committee.
- Sets general timetable and deadlines for completing the school’s self-study report.
- Obtains current accreditation guide(s) and forms.
- Establishes a self-study meeting structure and composition.
- Collects and coordinates review and editing of components of the self-study report.
- Plans the logistics for team visit: mailings to team members, and specific arrangements for the visit.
- **MOST IMPORTANT**: the steering committee keeps things moving, checks on progress of writing assignments frequently, helps to keep faculty from getting “bogged down” in unnecessary detail, and keeps school leadership informed of progress and potential problems.
- Ensures that the final self-study report has a cohesive voice and that it represents the school as a whole.

### 3. Orientation Visit

After completing the application process, the school needs to make arrangements for an on-campus visit by the AWSNA director of accreditation. The principal purpose is to ensure that the school community has a clear understanding of the purpose, process, and intended results of the accreditation process as a whole. If requested, the director of accreditation can also address specific school requests, such as clarification of Association agreements for accreditation and the value of accreditation to a broader cross-section of the school community. The hope is that in addition to ensuring the school is prepared to embark on the self-study, the visit will serve to relieve potential anxiety on the part of school community members and stimulate further enthusiasm and excitement for the process.

The visit can be held on a regular day of school, if desired, or it can be part of an in-service day.
A typical orientation visit will have these components:

- A tour of the campus.
- A meeting with the self-study steering committee (two hours) to discuss specific planning for the peer review visit. This session includes discussion of the role of the coordinator and/or steering committee, establishing an overall schedule and timetable, the self-study instrument and materials, establishment of the necessary self-study committees, preparation of the self-study report, selection of the visiting team, mailings to visiting team members, etc.
- A general orientation meeting for the entire administration, faculty, and non-teaching staff in addition to representatives from the Board of Trustees and parents (30-45 minutes) to provide an overview of the entire evaluation process.
- Additional meetings with the board and/or school leadership can be set up at the request of the school.
- The dates for the team visit may be set.

Usually the visit can be completed in one day, and the entire faculty needs to be involved only for the 30-45 minute general briefing. It works best if this general briefing is scheduled in to the regular faculty meeting time.

The $1500 administrative fee will be billed following this visit.

4. Selection of Visiting Team

Following the orientation visit, the director of accreditation begins the task of selecting the members of the visiting team. Teams generally have six to eight members with a variety of experience in administration and teaching. Potential team members disclose possible conflicts of interest if they have a prior relationship with the school (i.e. student, teacher, staff member, board member, parent, etc.) If the school feels that a prospective team member cannot be fair due to a conflict of interest, the school should notify the director of accreditation within two weeks of receiving the team roster. If the school is seeking accreditation solely from AWSNA, a team member from a non-AWSNA school will also be included. Team members are provided with a manual and training opportunities in advance of the visit. The school is provided a team roster four to six months in advance of the team visit.

5. Specific Tasks of the Steering Committee (Year 1)

- Schedule orientation visit to the school with AWSNA’s director of accreditation.
- See that the school and board review, revise (as necessary) and re-endorse the school's statements of mission, philosophy, and goals.
See that the policy documents are revised and current.

Undertake a survey of constituents (parents, board, faculty, staff, and others as applicable and appropriate).

Create appropriate committees and assignments necessary to complete all elements of the self-study report. See **Year 2 - School Self-Study** (next page)

Create a calendar for the self-study that includes all assignments and due dates and allows for meeting time.

### 6. Note on Dual Accreditation

Dual accreditation (involving AWSNA and one or more other school accrediting agencies) may require the other accrediting agency’s protocol be the lead protocol for the accreditation process. When this is the case, the school must provide a guide of where to find the various components of the AWSNA self-study report in the final packet. All AWSNA components not addressed in the lead protocol need to be included in the final packet.

Details of joint processes will be worked out on a case-by-case basis with the AWSNA director of accreditation. The AWSNA director of accreditation will work with the relevant agency(ies) one to three years in advance of any dual accreditation(s) to establish agreements on joint format.

Additional information on dual accreditation can be found in Section IV: **Dual Accreditations - Working with Other Agencies**.

### B. Year 2 - School Self-Study

Year 2 is devoted to the self-study process, culminating in the self-study report. Guided by the requirements of the report, the school will establish a structure that facilitates conversations and research around the various requirements as follows:

**Part A:** The school explores their mission and Waldorf identity. The focus is on the **AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools**, (pg. 5)

**Part B:** The school evaluates its policies and practices. The focus is on the **AWSNA Policies and Practices for Waldorf Schools**, (pg. 7)

**Part C:** The school reflects on what it has learned in the self-study process and looks ahead at plans for the future.

#### 1. Outline for the Self-Study Report

**Part A: Mission and Waldorf Identity**
A1. Declaration and description of the school’s mission and identity
A2. Description of how the Principles are living in the school
A3. Completed Principles Assessment

Part B: Policy and Practice Review

B1. Response to Policies and Practices #1 (Independence) and #2 (Responsible Self-Reflection)
B2. Completed Policies and Practices Inventory
B3. Documents necessary to support responses on the Policies and Practices Inventory
B4. Completed Policies and Practices Assessment

Part C: Reflections and Future Plans

C1. Summary description of the school’s major strengths and challenges
C2. Description of priorities for future work
C3. Summary of self-study process

Ideally, each member of the school finds his or her ideas and values reflected in the self-study report. Practically, portions of the report are completed by delegated groups and brought back to the larger group for consideration and approval. Ultimately, the self-study report needs to be recognized and embraced by the entire community as its purpose is to help the school move into the future with increased strength and clarity.

2. Detailed Guidelines for the Self-Study Report

Part A: Mission and Waldorf Identity

A1. Declaration and description of the school’s mission and identity. This opening of the self-study report serves to introduce the school and set the context for the remainder of the report. It includes the school’s history, mission, and a description of the school’s unique identity. This identity arises out of the school’s historical development, its location and environment, as well as the impulses of its founders (2-5 pages).

A2. Description of how the AWNSA Principles are living in the school. This section of the report is comprised of a written narrative describing how each of the principles lives in the school (2-5 pages per principle, for a total of 14-35 pages). The narrative for each principle must address the following:
   a. How is the principle living in the school, as demonstrated through the school’s policies, culture, and practices?
   b. In what ways has the school explored innovation in relation to the principle?

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3 All page length guidelines are based on 300 words per page. The guidelines are offered in the spirit of ensuring answers are comprehensive and concise.
c. In what ways has the school faced challenges or made compromises in relation to the principle? What, if anything, has been done to address these challenges or mitigate any compromises? What, if anything, are the plans to minimize or eliminate the challenges/compromises in the future?

d. Note: In the appropriate principle’s narrative, include the school’s work with the following topics: eurythmy, the arts, technology and media, external and parental pressures, and faculty discretion within the context of the school’s shared agreements.

*Principles References* (pg. 33) provides a brief list of materials that may be useful for a deeper exploration of the *Principles*.

For definitions of some of the terms used in the *Principles*, see *Definitions* (pg. 32)

**A3.** Completed *Principles Assessment*. For each of the principles, assess according to the following scale:

- Vibrant – The principle is living and is an example for other schools
- Established – The principle is living with consciousness
- Aspiring – The principle is living but is not fully consciously implemented
- Weak – The principle is not living

Any aspiring or weak principle must be identified as a major priority for future work in Part C2 (below).

**Part B: Policy and Practice Review**

**B1.** Response to *Policies and Practices #1* (Independence) and #2 (Responsible Self-Reflection) (2-5 pages per criterion). The responses should clearly address the expectations for independence and responsible self-reflection outlined in the *Policies and Practices* document. Schools identify strengths and challenges in working with these policy areas, and plans and priorities for strengthening the working based on their self-reflection.

**B2.** Completed *Policies and Practices Inventory*. The school completes the *Policies and Practices Inventory*, demonstrating that Policies and Practices #3-10 are met and implemented. The indicators provided in *Policies and Practices Indicators* are meant to spark thought and conversation; they are not meant to be prescriptive. The school has flexibility in demonstrating that the policies exist and are practiced.
B3. Documents necessary to support responses on the *Policies and Practices Inventory*. The list of required and supporting documents can be found in the *Policies and Practices Inventory*.

B4. Completed *Policies and Practices Assessment*. For each of the policies, assess according to the following scale:
   - Exemplary – The policy exists and is an example for other schools
   - Meets – The policy exists
   - Partially Meets – Some components of the policy exist
   - Does Not Meet – The policy does not exist

For each of the practices assess according to the following scale:
   - Exemplary – The policy is followed and is an example for other schools
   - In Practice – The policy is followed
   - Partially in Practice – Some components of the policy are followed
   - Is not in Practice – The policy is not followed

Any policy or practice that is partially or not met must be identified by the school as a major priority for future work in Part C2 (below).

**Part C: Reflections and Future Plans**

C1. Summary description of the school’s major strengths and challenges. Summarize the major strengths and challenges based on the content of the self-study report. This informs part C2, which identifies major and minor priorities for growth and change going forward (1-3 pages).

C2. Description of priorities for future work. After completing all prior sections of the self-study report, the school can look to its future, agree on the direction in which it is moving, strengthen its focus, and outline the path that it will follow. This description includes an annotated list of the top 3-5 major priorities and the top 5-10 minor priorities for future work, as identified by the school. It is expected that any principle, policy, or practice that is partially or not met will be a major priority (1-3 pages).

C3. Summary of self-study process. This is a summary of how various school constituents—faculty, staff, board, parents, alumni/ae—were involved in the process (1-3 pages).

3. **Self-Study Report Checklist**

The following items must be included in the self-study report:

1. Part A1: Declaration and description of the school’s mission and identity (2-5 pages)
2. Part A2: Description of how the AWNSA Principles are living in the school (14-35 pages)
3. Part A3: Completed Principles Assessment
4. Part B1: Response to Policies and Practices #1 (Independence) & #2 (Responsible Self-Reflection) (4-10 pages)
5. Part B2: Completed Policies and Practices Inventory
6. Part B3: Documents necessary to support responses on the Policies and Practices Inventory
7. Part B4: Completed Policies and Practices Assessment
8. Part C1: Summary description of the school’s major strengths and challenges (1-3 pages)
9. Part C2: Description of priorities for future work (1-3 pages)
10. Part C3: Summary of self-study process (1-3 pages)

The total package should be between 23-59 pages, plus supporting forms and documentation.

4. Specific Tasks for the Steering Committee (Year 2)
   
   o Ensure that all committees keep on track with their charge and schedule and that all committee reports follow the instructions given above.
   o Read all the results of any constituent surveys.
   o Edit the committee reports to ensure consistency of style, tone, and format.
   o Once the visit dates are established, ensure that teachers plan a normal schedule for the week, avoiding scheduling field trips, testing, special assemblies, etc.
Year 3 - Accreditation Visit

1. Preliminary Visit by Team Leader

The visiting team leader will make a one-day visit to the school two to six months prior to the peer review visit. The purpose of this visit is for the team leader to become thoroughly familiar with the school's history, its identity as a Waldorf school, its campus and vital statistics, the nature of the community, its financial condition, any special issues involved in the current self-study/peer review process, any problems it may be facing, and the results of the previous evaluation if the school is already accredited.

The visiting team leader will also use this visit to check on logistics (including transportation, lodging, meals, and meeting room for the team) and all preparatory arrangements for the visit. Since all visiting team reports are done electronically, there should be a discussion about the IT capabilities of the school, especially the ability of the school to provide a secure wireless network and printer for the visiting team’s use. It also may be necessary for the school to provide a laptop for one or more visiting team members.

The visiting team leader will work with the school to create a draft agenda for the team visit and plan for the Sunday afternoon reception and/or dinner.

In addition to conversations with the school's accreditation coordinator and/or the accreditation steering committee, there should be a brief, general meeting with the faculty. In this meeting, the visiting team leader will say something about his or her experience with self-study/peer review and school accreditation, provide a general outline of activities during the visit, and do everything possible to engender a sense of confidence and comfort within the school.

Note on dual accreditation: if another agency is the lead agency, the AWSNA co-leader may or may not participate in this preliminary visit.

2. Preparations by School

Certain tasks need to be accomplished by the school. These include:

- Making arrangements for lodging and meals for the visiting team members and providing advice and/or assistance in making travel arrangements, including flights and ground transportation between airport, lodging, and school.
- Providing space at the school for exclusive use of the visiting team during the visit, and providing equipment (such as computers) and supplies.
- Sending information to team members sufficiently ahead of time as follows:
  - Travel information, including ground transportation from airport
  - Housing information
  - Opportunity to communicate any dietary restrictions
- Sending the self-study report to the visiting team no later than five weeks prior to the visit. Team members should receive both hard copies and electronic versions.
• Sending the self-study report to the accreditation office (accreditation@awsna.org) via email.
• Meal planning: typically, the team members have breakfast at the hotel, lunch in the workroom and/or with students, and dinner on their own either on campus or at a local restaurant.
• Seeing that the school operates on as normal a schedule as possible during the visit (discouraging field trips, examinations, special assemblies, etc.). *Teachers will need advance notice to plan their activities according.*
• Ensuring that school personnel and representative groups (trustees, parents, etc.) will be available to talk with the visiting team members during the daytime.
• Planning of the campus tours and welcoming reception.
• Collection of supplementary documents for use of team during the visit (see Policies and Practices Indicators, pg.35).
• Additional documents (see Site Visit Document Checklist, pg. 39).

3. The Accreditation Visit

The principal purpose of the visiting team is to review, assess, and validate or modify the school’s own findings as generated by the school’s self-study process. Therefore, the visiting team will begin its work with the school’s self-study report. The visiting team is looking to confirm that the school does what it says it does, that it is living the AWSNA *Principles*, and that the policies exist and are being practiced.

It is important that everyone understand a limitation, which is both philosophical and practical, of the peer review visit. The AWSNA evaluation cannot, and does not, attempt to evaluate individual performance of anyone at the school. While the visiting team will visit individual classes, this is for the purpose of sensing the school’s overall instructional methods and style, and not to evaluate individual teaching effectiveness. The visiting team will review the school’s own process for evaluation of individual performance of administrators and teachers and will communicate its effectiveness to those involved, but will not be directed on the performance of individuals. Another limitation of the team visit is that it cannot provide a “consultant’s report,” since it is the whole school that is being evaluated and all team members will be involved in the review of multiple areas. There will be a team report for each area, but it must be limited to principal impressions only.

The actual schedule for the evaluation visit will vary with the school and its program, but it will typically span a four-day period as follows:

*First Day – Arrival and Orientation of the Visiting Team*
12:00 p.m. Arrival of team, check-in at place of lodging
2:00 p.m. Preliminary meeting of the visiting team
3:00-4:30 p.m. Tour of the campus, possibly led by alumni students
4:30 p.m. Informal social hour for school community, including administration, faculty, board, parents, and visiting team
5:30 p.m. Supper for visiting team, school leaders, and in-house accreditation coordinators
7:00-10:00 p.m. Organization, orientation, and planning meeting of the visiting team

Second & Third Days – Visits and Meetings

7:00 a.m. Breakfast
8:00-12:00 Noon Visits to classes, talks with faculty, etc.
12:00 Noon Lunch at school, informal talks with faculty and students
1:00 p.m. Visits to classes, activities, athletics, etc.
3:30 p.m. Meetings with special groups such as trustees, parent leaders, alumni representatives, faculty committees, departments, etc.
5:30 p.m. Supper (for visiting team alone)
7:00 p.m. Evening meeting of visiting team as a whole—discussion, examination of exhibits, preparation of reports, visiting team review of reports

Final Day – Reporting

7:00 a.m. Breakfast
8:00 a.m. Final visits, or re-visits, with emphasis on areas with questions or those not covered earlier
11:00 a.m. Meeting of visiting team—final review of subcommittee reports, agreement on major findings and recommendation on accreditation
12:00 Noon Lunch
2:00 p.m. Exit interview with the school representative(s), visiting team leader, and assistant chair, sharing of major findings
3:30 p.m. Oral exit report of major findings to faculty, administration, and trustees by the visiting team leader and team members

The actual schedule will be determined by the team leader in consultation with the school. It is essential that the visiting team have as much time as possible for visiting classes, meeting with faculty (and students), reviewing materials, and writing their reports during these four days. For this reason, it is inappropriate for the host school to attempt to entertain the visiting team, except for the one informal gathering of administration, faculty, trustees, parents, and team on
the day of arrival. This social occasion can be an afternoon tea or reception followed by a
dinner for the team and school community leaders. At the reception, the team leader will make
a few remarks and introduce the team. At the dinner, there should be a presentation of the
school’s philosophy and remarks of welcome from a school representative. Any such formal
presentation, however, should be very brief and principal emphasis should be on informal
conversation between community leaders and team.

The coordinator and/or steering committee from the school has an important final role during
the visit, involving such functions as:

- Serving as liaison to the visiting team, ensuring that the team has the equipment,
  materials, and information it needs.
- Seeing that team members are reimbursed for their expenses in a timely fashion,
  preferably on the last day of the visit. If team members have paid for flight tickets in
  advance, it is a courtesy to reimburse them as soon as possible.
- Providing any needed special schedules or interviewing time with faculty,
  administration, part-time personnel, representative trustees, parents, or students, etc.
- Providing computers and/or secretarial assistance as the team prepares its reports.
- Daily checking, as necessary, on lodging, meals, refreshments, transportation, etc.

The visiting team should wear nametags during the visit and it may be good for the school
faculty members to wear nametags too.

4. Report and Recommendation of the Visiting Team

At the conclusion of the peer review visit, the visiting team determines whether or not it will
recommend to AWSNA that the school completing its peer review should be granted
accreditation, and whether they recommend any conditions. This recommendation is not
shared with the school in the final meeting of the school and the visiting team leader. It is
sent in a separate letter to the AWSNA director of accreditation. The visiting team’s
recommendation is not an official action of AWSNA; rather, the decision is the responsibility of
the Accreditation Review Committee. On occasion, the visiting team’s recommendation is
modified by the Accreditation Review Committee.

If the visiting team recommends that there are conditions or that accreditation should not be
granted, there must be specific reasons, such as only partially meeting or not meeting the
AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools and/or the AWSNA Policies and Practices for Waldorf
Schools, demonstrable inadequacy of disclosure of mission or program, significant inconsistency
between the stated mission of the school and the program as observed by the visiting team, or
lack of analysis in the self-study.
The recommendation of the visiting team can be in one of the following forms and should, ideally, be decided by a process of consensus:

- Recommendation for accreditation.
- Recommendation for accreditation with specific conditions for follow-up and remediation of problems by the school, with a specific timeframe.
- Decision postponed (for initial accreditations only).
- Recommendation that the school not be approved for accreditation with specific reasons for this recommendation.

The team report will focus on how the school meets the criteria in *AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools* and *AWSNA Policies and Practices for Waldorf Schools*, and may also include general recommendations for school improvement. It is expected that the visiting team will report as a group, and every attempt will be made by the chair and the team to achieve consensus.

Additional instructions to the visiting team may be found in the *AWSNA Guide for Visiting Teams* (2017).

### 5. Accreditation Review Committee

The Accreditation Review Committee is a standing committee appointed by AWSNA and consists of qualified, experienced Waldorf teachers and administrators. The ARC meets twice a year (in January and May) and is responsible for reviewing all school and team reports pertinent to accreditation. As such, the ARC is responsible for deciding the accreditation status of an individual school and may accept or modify the recommendation of the visiting team. The ARC may make one of four decisions regarding accreditation status:

- Full accreditation (with term length specified).
- Accreditation with conditions (including a schedule for meeting the conditions).
- Decision postponed (pending completion by the school of specific requirements of the ARC).
- Denial of accreditation.

Once the ARC has made a decision regarding accreditation status, the accreditation office will inform the school and the regional Leadership Council member of that decision, including any conditions and follow-up requirements.

In the case of a denial of accreditation, the school will be notified, and will be given an opportunity to appeal if it chooses, before final action.
6. Action by the Delegates

Decisions of the ARC will be affirmed at the subsequent regional delegates' meeting, where the delegates also have responsibility for membership decisions.

7. Appeals

If the ARC denies accreditation, a member school is accorded the right to appear before the Accreditation Review Committee to appeal this decision.

Following the ARC meeting, the school will be notified in writing of the decision and the reasons for denial of accreditation. The school may request to have its representative(s) appear before the ARC to lodge an appeal or to submit additional information. Such a request must be submitted in writing to the director of accreditation no later than 60 days following receipt of the ARC decision letter.

C. Year 4 – First Follow-up Report and Action Plan Due

1. Progress on All Major Priorities

The school is expected to make progress on all major priorities.

2. Annual Report

The annual survey (DASL) is to be filed. This should include any substantive changes in the school.

3. First Follow-up Report and Action Plan

In the year following the AWSNA visit, the AWSNA visiting team report is reviewed by the administration, faculty, and trustees of the school, and the school develops a plan for school improvement, building upon what it has learned from its self-study and the visiting team report (especially the major recommendations and priorities).

The school reports back to AWSNA, including the following components:

- Cover letter, including any major changes since the team visit.
- Responses to each of the major recommendations in the team report
- Responses to any additional requirements noted in the ARC decision letter
• Plan for school improvement/strategic plan

The plan for school improvement can take the form of a strategic plan—either a new or updated one—or the form of a stand-alone document, one that projects out three to five years. The school attaches to its plan for school improvement/strategic plan update a cover letter indicating any major changes and a checklist, indicating agreement or disagreement with the major recommendations of the visiting team report and any requirements set forth in the ARC decision letter. If the school disagrees with a major recommendation or ARC requirement, a brief rationale must be included. These reports are due to the ARC by October 15 for fall visits and by March 15 for winter visits. The cover letter, plan for school improvement/strategic plan update, and first follow-up report are reviewed by the Accreditation Review Committee; any action is communicated to the school.

D. Year 5 - Continue Progress on All Priorities

1. Progress on All Major Priorities

The school is expected to make progress on all major priorities.

2. Annual Report

The annual survey (DASL) is to be filed. This should include any substantive changes in the school.

E. Year 6 – Second Follow-up Report Due

1. Progress on All Major Priorities

The school is expected to make progress on all major priorities.

2. Annual Report

The annual survey (DASL) is to be filed. This should include any substantive changes in the school.

3. Second Follow-up Report

At the end of the third year following the team visit, the school submits a report to the
accreditation office. In this report, the school describes progress made on all priorities and recommendations.

The report is reviewed by the Accreditation Review Committee. In most instances, this completes the school’s responsibility for reporting to AWSNA for this accreditation cycle, but AWSNA may require a supplementary, or later report, or other form of follow-up, if serious concerns remain about the school or demonstrable lack of attention to opportunities for self-improvement is apparent. The action by AWSNA on the report and required follow-up or remediation, if any, is reported promptly to the school.

The first follow-up report includes the following components:

- Cover letter, including any major changes since the first follow-up report.
- For each of the major and minor recommendations, indicate whether it is:
  - Complete.
  - In-progress.
  - Not implemented. (Include a brief explanation for non-implementation.)
- Responses to any additional requirements noted in the ARC decision letter.
- Updated plan for school improvement/strategic plan.

F. Year 7 – Complete All Priorities

The school is expected to complete all priorities. Submission of the annual survey (DASL), including reporting of substantive changes, is required.

G. Maintaining Accreditation

1. Good standing

To maintain accreditation, a school must remain in good standing, which includes timely payment of AWSNA dues, completion of the AWSNA annual survey (DASL), and fulfilling membership requirements as outlined in the Path to Membership.

2. Annual report

Each year an annual survey (DASL) is to be filed no later than that year’s deadline. This report should include any significant changes in the school. If the report is not received, the
accreditation designation on the website listing for the school may be changed to “non-compliant” status.

3. **Renewal of Accreditation**

Two years prior to the end of the term of accreditation, a school must file an application for renewal. This will begin a new cycle of self-study and team visit.

4. **Postponements and Extensions**

See Accreditation Policy Handbook for details.
IV. Dual Accreditations - Working with Other Agencies

AWSNA partners with fourteen other accrediting agencies, and many AWSNA member schools choose to pursue dual accreditation with one or more of our partners. The other accrediting agencies have processes that are generally similar to AWSNA’s, including self-study, peer review, and follow-up, but there may be differences in timing or procedure. AWSNA has agreements in place with these other agencies, and a school can often complete a single self-study and report and host a single joint visiting team, thus conserving resources and minimizing duplication.

Early in the process, AWSNA, the co-operating agencies, and the school will decide what processes will be followed and which agency will be considered the lead agency. In general, the visiting team leader comes from a school accredited by the lead agency, and the school's report will follow the form required by the lead agency.

The details of the joint process will be worked out on a case-by-case basis with the AWSNA director of accreditation. An AWSNA member school may request an exception to the agreement if it can demonstrate that a different form will adequately address the expectations of both agencies. The exception must be approved by both agencies.

It is worth noting that a school applying for dual accreditation is expected to meet all the requirements and standards of both agencies.

Specific notes on the timeline:

Year 1: Schools file separate applications with each agency. The AWSNA director of accreditation makes an orientation visit and initiates conversation with co-operating agency.

Year 2: If the self-study format is not as described in this manual, the school is responsible for seeing that all of the AWSNA requirements are met.

All schools must address all of the AWSNA criteria:
- The Principles. Complete the self-study report using the AWSNA format, or include an addendum that serves as a roadmap for the visiting team so that they know where the responses to the Principles are in the dual agencies self-study format.
- The Policies and Practices. Use the AWSNA inventory form as a roadmap for the visiting team so that they know where the responses to the Policies and Practices are in the dual agencies self-study format.

All schools must complete the following:
- Part A2
- Principles Assessment form
• Policies and Practices Inventory
• Policies and Practices Assessment

For all other sections described in Year 2 - School Self-Study, the school must create an alignment document showing where in the self-study report the AWSNA-required information can be found.

The director of accreditation is available to advise you on this process.

Year 3: Team visit. The team will have a leader or co-leader from an AWSNA member school. Approximately 50% of the team members will come from AWSNA schools, and the team will collaborate on a single joint report. The AWSNA co-leader may or may not participate in the logistical visit prior to the full team visit.

Length of term: If another agency grants a term of accreditation that is different from that granted by AWNSA's Accreditation Review Committee, the school may request that the terms be aligned to expire at the same time. This request should be made in writing to the AWSNA director of accreditation.

Mid-cycle visits: A mid-cycle visit may be required by one or both agencies. AWSNA will participate in all mid-cycle visits.

Follow-up reporting: Unless otherwise noted, a school with dual accreditation is expected to file the AWSNA first follow-up report and the AWSNA second follow-up report. If the other agency has a different reporting timetable than AWSNA, the school may request that the AWSNA report due dates be aligned with those of the other agency.
V. Working with WECAN

For AWSNA schools that are also members of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN):

Our current procedures for a school wishing to combine the AWSNA self-study/team visit process with the corresponding WECAN process can be found in the member portal of the AWSNA website.
VI. Supplementary Materials

1. Definitions

Definitions used in the AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools and the AWSNA Policies and Practices:

1. **Anthroposophy** – a path of knowledge aiming to guide the spiritual element in the human being to the spiritual in the universe.  
2. **Board** – the individuals who serve as trustees for the school.  
3. **Colleagues/employees** – all paid faculty and staff members of the school.  
4. **Community** – the broader group of individuals with a connection to the school—employees, board members, parents, students, alumni, alumni parents, and neighbors.  
5. **Education/pedagogical practices/pedagogical study/pedagogical program** – the curricular, methodological, and assessment components of the school activities.  
   a. **Curriculum** – what is taught (scope) and when it is taught (sequence). The content of what is taught in a school or program.  
   b. **Pedagogy** – how/the way the curriculum is taught. The strategies or activities for teaching or supporting learning.  
   c. **Assessment** – activities that support understanding the student’s actual and potential physical, emotional, and intellectual growth/attainment.  
   d. **Evaluation** – conclusions based on assessment.  
6. **Faculty** – the staff of the school with teaching and pedagogical responsibilities as their primary responsibilities.  
7. **Pedagogy** – how/the way the curriculum is taught. The strategies or activities for teaching or supporting learning.  
8. **School community** – those individuals with an immediate connection to the school—employees, board members, parents, and students.  
9. **Self-administered** – decisions about the school are made by employees/colleagues and board members.  
10. **Staff** – the administrative staff of the school.  
11. **Waldorf school** – all aspects of the school.

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4 *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, opening remarks
2. Principles references

Principle 1.
The image of the human being as a spiritual being informs every aspect of the school.

*Theosophy*, Chapter 1 (Body, Soul, Spirit)

Principle 2.
Waldorf schools foster social renewal by cultivating human capacities in service to the individual and society.

*Education as a Force for Social Change*

*Foundations of Human Experience*

Principle 3.
Anthroposophical understanding of child development guides the educational program.

*Foundations of Human Experience*, Lecture 9

*Balance in Teaching*, Lecture 3, 1st paragraph

*Modern Art of Education*

*Spiritual Ground of Education*

*Child’s Changing Consciousness*, Lecture 3

*Balance in Teaching*

Principle 4.
Waldorf schools support freedom in teaching within the context of the school’s shared agreements.

*The Renewal of the Social Organism*

Principle 5.
The conscious development of human relationships fosters individual and community health.

*The Universal Human*, Lecture 4

Principle 6.
Spiritual development in support of professional growth is an ongoing activity for the faculty, staff, and board.

*How to Know Higher Worlds*

*Towards the Deepening of Waldorf Education*

*Modern Art of Education*, Lecture 12
Principle 7.
Collaboration and shared responsibility provide the foundations of school leadership and governance.

Education as a Force for Social Change
The Renewal of the Social Organism
3. Policies and Practices Indicators

One of the responsibilities of the visiting team is to confirm the appropriate policies exist and that they are being practiced. To confirm, the team will need evidence that the policies exist and that they are being practiced. Many of the expectations can be confirmed through document review, although some may need interviews or observation to affirm a policy is being practiced. This document contains a list of possible documents that will confirm the policy exists or that it is being followed.

Some documents will be required, and will be indicated as required in the final version of the guide, once the new criteria are approved in the summer delegates meeting.

These documents are to be available in the visiting team workroom during the visit.

Explanation of list of indicators:
- The primary label (1, 2, ...) and name match the policy number.
- The secondary label (a, b, ...) offers suggested indicators to verify that the policy exists.
- The tertiary label (i, ii, ...) offers suggested indicators to verify the policy is practiced.

Any evidence that a policy is practiced should be unidentifiable (names should be blocked out). The use of documentation below refers to paperwork that traces the implementation of the process. Sometimes the indicators must be verified by looking at files—in these cases, indicate with whom a visiting team member should speak in order to view them.

Confidentiality: AWSNA and its representatives will abide by legal confidentiality requirements in relation to any documentation needed for the accreditation process.

1. Independence
   a. Bylaws or policy indicating not-for-profit (or equivalent⁵)
      i. IRS (or equivalent) tax-exempt paperwork
      ii. Organization’s articles of incorporation
   b. Board appointment policy to demonstrate board independence
      i. Board minutes of actual appointment approval

2. Responsible Self-Reflection
   a. Membership in AWSNA demonstrates a policy commitment
      i. Most recent strategic or long-range plan (at least 3 years)
      ii. Prior self-study report, visiting team report, and follow-up reports.

3. Support for Students and Families

⁵ The equivalent paperwork for Canada or Mexico that may have a different name or different governing agency granting authority.
a. Parent Handbook and Student Handbook, if available
   i. Several applications, some accepted, some not
   ii. Documentation of student receiving extra support
   iii. Documentation of student (not) meeting graduation requirements
   iv. Documentation of student for whom the discipline policy is enacted
   v. Documentation of student suspended and expelled
   vi. Documentation of a family/student-submitted grievance
   vii. Example student and alumni records
   viii. Proof related legal requirements are met
   ix. Official school/institute statements on nondiscriminatory admissions practices
   x. Completed contracts (unidentifiable, i.e. names not visible)
   xi. Documentation of tuition assistance application (unidentifiable, i.e. names not visible)
   xii. Documentation for a family that does not follow agreements or meet expectations (unidentifiable, i.e. names not visible)
   xiii. Documentation of a family-submitted grievance (unidentifiable, i.e. names not visible)

4. Support for Faculty and Staff
   a. Employee Handbook
      i. Examples of recruitment efforts
      ii. Documentation of employee hire and orientation
      iii. Hire and rehire letters (unidentifiable, i.e. names not visible)
      iv. List of employees with qualifications
      v. Documentation of employee-mentored support
      vi. Employee professional development plan
      vii. Documentation of employee review
      viii. Documentation of employee for whom the professional behavior/expectations policy is enacted
      ix. Documentation of an employee dismissed
      x. Documentation of an employee-submitted grievance
      xi. Example employee records
      xii. Proof related legal requirements are met
      xiii. Official school/institute statements on nondiscriminatory hiring practices

5. Engaged Community
   i. Fliers of specific events or activities
   ii. Annual appeal letter

6. Articulated Educational Program
a. Educational policy documentation for the curriculum, methodology, and assessment
   i. Minutes from a faculty meeting when the multiple aspects of the educational program are established or reviewed
   ii. Current and prior two years annual programming/offering
   iii. Curriculum guide/scope and sequence
   iv. A teacher evaluation of adherence to the methodology
   v. Student assessment records
   vi. Documentation of supplementary program implementation (student registration for summer camp, etc.)

7. Articulated Decision Making
   a. Bylaws, board handbook, governance and management document, policies (crisis and risk management, conflict of interest), and mandates (decision-making authority and responsibility) that define the decision-making responsibility and authority.
      i. Minutes of these policies being established or reviewed
      ii. Minutes of the identified entities carrying out these responsibilities (board minutes, faculty minutes, college minutes, etc.)
      iii. Minutes of updates on the strategic plan
      iv. Minutes of review of decision-making organizational structure that include consideration of effectiveness
      v. Signed conflict-of-interest paperwork
      vi. Minutes of conflict-of-interest policy being implemented
      vii. Minutes of work on establishing a viable strategic plan
      viii. Proof related legal requirements are met

8. Sufficient Resources
   a. Financial and budgeting policies, including salary and benefits policies
      i. Current operating budget and most recent year-end financial reports
      ii. Report from full-opinion audit of year preceding team visit
      iii. Evidence of sufficient funding for sufficient salaries, benefits, professional development, and the stated educational program
      iv. Evidence of sufficient resources to support the regional and continental associative work of AWSNA with the intention of furthering Waldorf Education in North America
      v. Proof related legal requirements are met

9. Prioritized Health and Safety Considerations
   a. Handbooks or mandates that address the health and safety policies
      i. Proof related legal requirements met for local, state/provincial, and federal government (ADA, CDC, EPA, etc.)

10. Prioritized Legal Compliance
a. Handbooks or mandates that address the legal policies
   i. Proof related legal requirements are met for local, state/provincial, and federal government: employment practices, etc.
4. Site Visit Document Checklist

Checklist of items to be available during the visit:

1. One hardcopy of the self-study report and all supporting documents
2. Hardcopy of prior self-study, visiting team report, and follow-up reports
3. All latest approved handbooks
4. School bylaws
5. Minutes: board, college, faculty, administration
6. Dashboard of key indicators of health from the AWSNA annual report (TBD by ET and director of accreditation)
7. Responses to constituent surveys, if any
8. Rosters of faculty, staff, and board (with photos, if possible)
9. School map
10. Daily teaching schedule (who teaches and what, when, and where) for the three days of the visit
11. Current school year calendar
12. Committee meeting schedule covering days of visit
B. Forms

All forms are available as Word documents accreditation page of the AWSNA member portal.

1. Principles Assessment

Any principle assessed as aspiring or weak should be reflected as a major priority (by the school) and a major recommendation (by the visiting team). If any principle is assessed as aspiring or weak, there may be cause for accreditation with conditions, or a denial of accreditation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>School Assessment (1 to 4)</th>
<th>School Comments</th>
<th>Visiting Team Assessment (1 to 4)</th>
<th>Visiting Team Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The image of the human being as a spiritual being informs every aspect of the school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Waldorf schools foster social renewal by cultivating human capacities in service to the individual and society.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Anthroposophical understanding of child development guides the educational program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Waldorf Schools support freedom in teaching within the context of the school’s shared agreements.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The conscious development of human relationships fosters individual and community health.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Spiritual development in support of professional growth is an ongoing activity for the faculty, staff, and board.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Scale:

1. Vibrant – The principle is living and is an example for other schools
2. Established – The principle is living with consciousness
3. Aspiring – The principle is living but is not fully consciously implemented
4. Weak – The principle is not living
### Assessment Scale:

1. **Vibrant** – The principle is living and is an example for other schools  
2. **Established** – The principle is living with consciousness  
3. **Aspiring** – The principle is living but is not fully consciously implemented  
4. **Weak** – The principle is not living

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>School Assessment (1 to 4)</th>
<th>School Comments</th>
<th>Visiting Team Assessment (1 to 4)</th>
<th>Visiting Team Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Collaboration and shared responsibility provide the foundations of school leadership and governance.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. **Policy & Practices Inventory**

(a Word version of this form is available in the accreditation section of the AWSNA member portal—schools are encouraged to include links to specific documents.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Policy Areas</th>
<th>Evidence that policy exists (Document, Observation, Interview)</th>
<th>Evidence that policy is practiced.</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 Independence</td>
<td>IRS 501(c)(3) letter&lt;sup&gt;6&lt;/sup&gt; Bylaws</td>
<td>Ex: On-site binder, Tab 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 Responsible Self-Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 Support for Students and Families</td>
<td>a) Application and acceptance</td>
<td>a) Parent Handbook, p. 25</td>
<td>Ex: On-site Parent HB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Assessment, support, supervision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Graduation requirements, as applicable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) Behavioral agreements and expectations, for students and families/adults, including communication protocol</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e) Contracts, including refund policy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f) Tuition and tuition assistance, and as appropriate, financial accessibility</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g) Family/adult commitments, including volunteerism and parent education</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>h) Record-keeping</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i) Suspension, dismissal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>j) Grievances, for students and families/adults</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<sup>6</sup> All bold items are required supporting documentation.
| #4 Support for Faculty and Staff | a) Recruitment, hiring, and orientation  
b) Mentoring, professional development, and assessment  
c) Compensation, including benefits  
d) Professional behavior and expectations, including communication protocol  
e) Record-keeping  
f) Dismissal  
g) Grievances  
h) Conflict resolution |
|---|---|
| #5 Engaged Community | a) Friend and fundraising  
b) Community events  
c) Alumni/ae  
d) Diversity statement |
| #6 Articulated Educational Program | a) Annual programming schedule  
b) Curriculum  
c) Methodology  
d) Assessment methods  
e) Supplementary programs |
| #7 Articulated Decision Making | a) Governance structure, including major areas of responsibility, authority, and accountability  
b) Strategic planning  
c) Crisis and risk management  
d) Conflict of interest |
| #8 Sufficient Resources | a) Financial, facilities, and material management  
b) Budgeting, including three-to-five-year planning  
c) Annual audit reviews  

**Full audit results**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#9 Prioritized Health and Safety Considerations</th>
<th>#10 Prioritized Legal Compliance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>d)</strong> A full audit, occurring within two years of the accreditation site visit</td>
<td><strong>a)</strong> Hiring practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>a)</strong> Student safety and protection, including abuse reporting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b)</strong> Harassment prevention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>c)</strong> Emergency preparedness, including natural or human-caused emergencies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>d)</strong> Field trips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>e)</strong> Medication management, including first aid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>f)</strong> Allergy management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>g)</strong> Public health notices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>h)</strong> Visitor and volunteer screening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>i)</strong> Storage of science materials &amp; equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Policies and Practices Assessment Form

**Guidelines:**

Provide an explanation in the appropriate comments section for any score other than a 2. Be specific about which policy(ies) and/or practice(s) the score refers to and why.

Include any policy(ies)/practice(s) with a score of 3 or 4 as a **major priority** (by the school/institute) and a **major recommendation** (by the visiting team).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/Institute Self-Assessment (1 to 4)</th>
<th>Visiting Team Assessment (1 to 4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>Policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices</td>
<td>Practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Independence

Comments

2. Responsible self-reflection

Comments

3. Support for Students and Families

Policies Assessment Scale:

1. Exemplary – The policy exists and is an example for other schools
2. Meets – The policy exists
3. Partially Meets – Some components of the policy exist
4. Does Not Meet – The policy does not exist

Practices Assessment Scale:

1. Exemplary – The policy is followed and is an example for other schools
2. In Practice – The policy is followed
3. Partially in Practice – Some components of the policy are followed
4. Is Not in Practice – The policy is not followed
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Support for Faculty and Staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>5. Engaged Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Articulated Educational Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
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**Policies Assessment Scale:**

1. Exemplary – The policy exists and is an example for other schools
2. Meets – The policy exists
3. Partially Meets – Some components of the policy exist
4. Does Not Meet – The policy does not exist

**Practices Assessment Scale:**

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<td>Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Articulated Decision Making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sufficient Resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Prioritized Health and Safety Considerations</td>
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<td>Comments</td>
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<td>10. Prioritized Legal Compliance</td>
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**Policies Assessment Scale:**

1. Exemplary – The policy exists and is an example for other schools
2. Meets – The policy exists
3. Partially Meets – Some components of the policy exist
4. Does Not Meet – The policy does not exist

**Practices Assessment Scale:**

1. Exemplary – The policy is followed and is an example for other schools
2. In Practice – The policy is followed
3. Partially in Practice – Some components of the policy are followed
4. Is Not in Practice – The policy is not followed
### Policies Assessment Scale:

1. **Exemplary** – The policy exists and is an example for other schools
2. **Meets** – The policy exists
3. **Partially Meets** – Some components of the policy exist
4. **Does Not Meet** – The policy does not exist

### Practices Assessment Scale:

1. **Exemplary** – The policy is followed and is an example for other schools
2. **In Practice** – The policy is followed
3. **Partially in Practice** – Some components of the policy are followed
4. **Is Not in Practice** – The policy is not followed

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<td>Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. **Application for Initial Accreditation**

*This form is to be used by schools applying for AWSNA accreditation for the first time. The form should be submitted to the AWSNA director of accreditation at [accreditation@awsna.org](mailto:accreditation@awsna.org) by either May 1 or November 1. You will receive an invoice for the $200 application fee.*

Date: Enter date here

School name: Enter name here

Name of school administrator: Enter name here

Administrator’s email: Enter address here

Administrator’s phone # w/extension: Enter # here

Name of accreditation contact (if different): Enter name here

Accreditation contact’s title: Enter name here

Accreditation contact’s email: Enter address here

Accreditation contact’s phone # w/extension: Enter # here

Date of most recent financial review: Enter date here

Date of most recent full opinion financial audit: Enter date here

Date of most recent long-range planning process: Enter date here

WECAN membership status: Enter status here:

Are you seeking dual accreditation? Yes/ No

If yes, with what agency?

Has the school had any substantive changes since the last AWSNA annual report? Yes/ No

Form submitted by: Enter name here
5. Application for Renewal of Accreditation

This form is to be used by schools applying for renewal of AWSNA accreditation. The form should be submitted to the AWSNA director of accreditation at accreditation@awsna.org 25 to 32 months in advance of the end of the accreditation term. In general, applications for renewal should be received by May 1 for spring team visits, and by November 1 for fall team visits. You will receive an invoice for the $200 application fee.

Date: Enter date here
School name: Enter name here

Name of school administrator: Enter name here
Administrator’s email: Enter address here
Administrator’s phone # w/extension: Enter # here

Name of accreditation contact (if different): Enter name here
Accreditation contact’s title: Enter name here
Accreditation contact’s email: Enter address here
Accreditation contact’s phone # w/extension: Enter # here

Date of most recent financial review: Enter date here
Date of most recent full-opinion financial audit: Enter date here
Date of most recent long-range planning process: Enter date here

WECAN membership status: Enter status here:

Are you seeking dual accreditation? Yes/ No
   If yes, with what agency?

Has the school had any substantive changes since the last AWSNA annual report? Yes/ No

Form submitted by: Enter name here