



# Accrediting Commission for Schools Western Association of Schools and Colleges

## ACS WASC PROBATIONARY VISIT PROCEDURES SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of the probationary visit is to determine the school's progress in terms of student achievement of the schoolwide learner outcomes. Also examined during the probationary visit are the key outcomes and the progress made on the recommendations and the critical areas for follow-up identified by the previous visiting committee.

Schools that receive probationary accreditation prepare a progress report to submit to the visiting committee and participate in a two-day\* probationary visit. The progress report should be completed and distributed **no later than six weeks prior to the visit**.

A confirmation form will be sent from the ACS WASC office and the school will choose the visit dates. The ACS WASC office will assign the probationary visiting committee.

The school works closely with the chairperson in planning the schedule for the visit and the principal is responsible for all logistical arrangements, such as a workroom, etc. The visiting committee makes its own hotel reservations and payments.

Following the visit, the visiting committee will make an accreditation status recommendation regarding the continued accreditation status of the school.

### **Preparation of the School's Progress Report**

The progress report should be prepared by the leadership team responsible for monitoring the schoolwide action plan. All stakeholders are encouraged to be involved in the process.

If there are differing opinions regarding the nature and extent of progress, this should be indicated and explained in the report. If changing conditions have made parts of the action plan obsolete, that should be noted and explained.

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

The school probationary progress report template can be found on the ACS WASC website at [www.acswasc.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf\\_general/ProbationaryReportTemplate.doc](http://www.acswasc.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf_general/ProbationaryReportTemplate.doc).

### **Progress Report Format**

The school's progress report format is as follows:

#### **I. Student/Community Profile Data**

Include the following:

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

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\* Visiting committees meet the afternoon preceding the first day of the visit.

- An updated summary of data with implications, identified critical learner needs, and important questions for staff discussion.

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

## II. Significant School Changes and Developments

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

## III. Ongoing School Improvement

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

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

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

## V. Schoolwide Action Plan Refinements

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

## Distribution of the School's Progress Report

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

## ACS WASC PROBATIONARY VISIT VISITING COMMITTEE INSTRUCTIONS

The probationary visiting committee is comprised of the chairperson and additional members. The visiting committee will visit the school to meet with the principal, leadership team, and other groups responsible for the monitoring and implementation of the schoolwide action plan. The visiting committee will focus its review on the progress made on the critical areas for follow-up (major recommendations) made by the previous visiting committee and review the action plan.

The ACS WASC office will appoint a committee of two to five members, one of whom will be from the original visiting committee when available. The number of team members is determined by the school's enrollment:

<u>School Enrollment</u>	<u>Number of Team Members</u>
1–449	2
450–1499	3
1500–2499	4
2500 +	5

A confirmation form will be sent from the ACS WASC office; the school will select the dates for the visit. The chairperson works closely with the school to coordinate the visit logistics and schedule. Visit details should be coordinated via email or phone; please note, previsits are **not** part of the probationary visit process. Payment and reservations for lodging will (1) either be made by each individual visiting committee member or (2) the chairperson may elect to coordinate this for the entire team. The visiting committee's expense vouchers should be submitted to the ACS WASC Burlingame Office for reimbursement after the visit.

### Visiting Committee Guidelines

The school should provide copies of the following to the visiting committee:

1. The previous ACS WASC visiting committee report
2. The current schoolwide action plan
3. The school's probationary progress report, to be received **no later than six weeks** prior to the visit.

The visiting committee reviews these materials and the school's follow-up process in response to the previous visiting committee report. The visiting committee will review progress made and significant developments at the school with the principal and/or Leadership Team. The visiting committee should emphasize the importance of noting the progress the school has made in student achievement using multiple means of assessment.

### Visiting Committee Report

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

The visiting committee report format is as follows:

### **I. Introduction**

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

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

- Provide an analytical summary about the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section referencing the critical areas for follow-up addressed through each section.
- Note evidence supporting the progress made and the impact made on student achievement.
- If any critical areas for follow-up were not included in the school's action plan, indicate what actions have been taken to address these issue(s) and include supporting evidence
- ➔ Note: The school's schoolwide action plan should have incorporated all the critical areas of follow-up or major recommendations that were stated in the last visiting committee report.

### **III. Commendations and Recommendations**

#### **A. Commendations:**

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

#### **B. Recommendations:**

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

Visiting committee materials can be found on the ACS WASC website at [www.acswasc.org/vc/other-visits/probationary-visits/](http://www.acswasc.org/vc/other-visits/probationary-visits/).

### **Confidential Accreditation Status Recommendation**

The chairperson submits a confidential accreditation status recommendation to ACS WASC which includes a brief justification statement. The recommendation and justification statement includes:

- The progress made in responding to the schoolwide critical areas for follow-up (major recommendations)
- Whether additional visits or other conditions should be required of the school during the remainder of its current six-year accreditation cycle.

The committee will recommend one of the following options:

1. Probation removed and accreditation status restored; the accreditation cycle continues
2. Continued probationary accreditation granted for one additional year with a two-day probationary visit required in one year
3. Accreditation status withheld.

At the next Commission meeting, the Commission will make a decision regarding the accreditation status of the school. This action will be based on the progress report submitted by the school, the visiting committee report, and the confidential accreditation status recommendation. The school will be informed of the Commission action following the ACS WASC Commission meeting.

### **Distribution of the Visiting Committee Materials**

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

Please contact the ACS WASC Office if you have any questions.

#### **Northern California Schools\***

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\* For ACS WASC purposes, Northern California is comprised of all counties north of and including San Luis Obispo, Kings, Tulare, and Inyo.