HIDOE/WASC Visiting Committee Member
Training for
Virtual Full Visits
2020-2021

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WASC Visits During the 2020-21 School Year

• Fall 2020 visits will all be conducted “virtually”

• Schools do not have to update their self-study if their visit was moved from the 2019-20 school year. However, the school should be able to share what has been done since the report was completed with supporting information. This could include the impact of online learning for the students and other issues as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.

• As we go through today’s presentation, please keep in mind that the context for the information may be a “virtual” school visit rather than in-person.
Virtual Full Visits

Expectations for All Virtual or Blended Visits:

• Every care must be taken to ensure that the process and result will be as rigorous and thorough as an on-site visit.

• Based on the WASC research-based criteria/indicators, the virtual visit focuses on continuous school improvement and the progress related to high quality learning and well-being for all students.

• Video, audio and connectivity quality must be sufficient to allow for good communication – both recorded and live.
Based on HIDOE/WASC criteria, school’s purpose and General Learner Outcomes and self-study....

- Provide insight about student learning and school program
  - Validate school program
  - Celebrate school strengths
  - Provide recommendations on growth areas
- Observe, Interview, Conduct meetings virtually
- Prepare a written report for school and Commission
- Recommend an accreditation status
- Commission takes action
The Big Picture

Ultimate Goal:

A Quality Academic Plan
owned by
All Stakeholders
How well are our students achieving?

Are we doing everything possible to support high achievement for all students?
Focus on Learning

Accreditation Cycle of Quality
Where is the school now?
Where’s it going?
Does it have a good roadmap?
Therefore, What is my role as a visiting committee member?

To be knowledgeable
about what the school has written
about the culture of the school
about the ACS WASC criteria
about the Focus on Learning process
Let’s Have a Conversation....
What are the expectations for a school conducting a virtual full visit?
How does that impact the role and responsibilities of the visiting committee chair/members?
Virtual Visit: School Expectations

• School **not** required to update written self-study report

• However, school will be able to share what has been done since the report was completed with supporting information, including impact of online learning for the students and other issues related to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

• Ensure the self-study and supporting evidence available prior to visit for visiting committee (VC).

• VC chair may request additional information related to student wellness and safety standards, such as the school’s Safety Plan.
Virtual Visit: School Expectations

• WASC visit occurring-Inform all stakeholders

• Inform VC chair about parameters, i.e., any contractual requirements

• Student meetings include a staff member and two visiting committee members
Virtual Visit:
Important Technological Requirements

The school will need to ensure the following technological capabilities:

• online conferencing facilities to allow small groups to participate in meetings (e.g., Zoom, Google Meetings, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, Skype or similar); individual stations (laptops) tend to work better than large groups in a room;

• reliable Internet access to support the above;

• video recording, camera. Tablet/iPAD/SMARTphone devices for recording devices to record video and images of the school prior to the virtual team evaluation visit; and
Virtual Visit:
Important Technological Requirements (cont.)

The school will need to ensure the following technological capabilities:

• video recording devices and the wireless support necessary to stream live video of the school in action if it is in session during the virtual team evaluation visit or the ability to observe virtual classes in session.

NOTE: The visiting committee chair/members will conduct a test of the technological requirements with the school before the virtual evaluation visit.
How to Read the Self-Study

Read the whole self-study.

Mark it up! Make some decisions about possible strength, questions to ask during the visit, and anything that needs doublechecking to confirm the information.
Review: Reading the self-study

- Not linear
- Take information from where it is
- Mark it up!

Reread as necessary
- Review criteria
- Consistency
- Matches and gaps
- Conclusions

What questions are raised?
- How important are they?
- How will you find out?
Pre-Visit Preparation Worksheets
Use a short-hand system to make notations

Edit the notes into coherent paragraphs for the sections you are assigned

Work with your assigned teammate to complete one cohesive previsit draft

Send your assigned sections to your chairperson
How to Read the Self Study

Make notes in the margins of the SS

• ‘+’ or ‘S’ = strength
• ‘-’ or ‘G’ = growth area
• ‘?’ or ‘Q’ = question to ask during visit
• ‘/’ or ‘C’ = check for evidence

Variations are possible

SC or +/- = possible strength
GC or -/ = possible growth area

[See handout: How to Read a Self Study]
Your prewriting assignment

Using the school’s self-study and available evidence:

• Synthesize the school’s response
• Draw in additional information which may be available in other chapters in the self-study, from the school’s website, and/or from other legitimate sources
• Draft a response to the PROMPT
• Indicate your questions and/or concerns
• Identify evidence
• Provide questions and/or comments for ALL sections of the report
1. Use a “short-hand” method to make notations as you read the Self Study Report

2. Transfer the “short-hand” notes to the “Pre-Visit Preparation Worksheets (cut and paste if you highlight significant text off a Word copy of the school’s report)

3. Edit the notes into coherent paragraphs for the sections you are assigned to. DO NOT COPY WHAT THE SCHOOL WROTE-PARAPHRASE (change voice to that of the VC)

4. Send your assigned sections to your chairperson

5. Share your other notes with other members of the VC who are assigned to those sections at your first mtg.
Pre-Writing to Assigned Criteria Areas
Big Questions

Do the findings respond to what is being asked by the criteria and indicators?

How does the evidence support …

the findings?

the strengths:

the prioritized growth needs?

Has the school gained insight about the degree to which learning is being supported?
Important enough?

What must I think about?

How will I find out?

Possible questions?

What do I look for?

What documents would be helpful?

Example of things to think about
C2. Instruction Criterion - Rigorous and Relevant Instruction (criterion not included in sample of writing for one indicator)

Current Knowledge (Indicator statement not included in sample)

At [school] we have created a four to six week professional development cycle that includes: learning a schoolwide strategy, practicing with teachers, practicing in class, being observed by a peer and analyzing the student work in SWA. This cycle has benefitted our teachers, who are mainly new to the profession. They have developed in their instructional skill exponentially, rather than gradually over time.

Peer observation has provided our teachers the opportunity to not only observe their peers using the school-wide strategies, but also to observe their own students in different academic classes and settings. This has proven to be invaluable to our grade level discussions and department meetings particularly as we look to improve writing. Teachers can see what other teachers do to engage students and to challenge them, which fosters tremendous collaboration among our professionals. Cycles have included: Rituals and Routines, Cornell Notes, 7 Habits, Accountable Talk, Frontloading Vocabulary and a cycle of writing instruction is forthcoming.

Example From the school’s self-study
C2: Instruction Criterion – Rigorous and Relevant Instruction

Current Knowledge *(Indicator statement not included in sample)*

During professional development sessions led by teachers, staff has studied a variety of strategies to engage and challenge students. These have been supported by peer and administrative observations and the report states that teachers improvement “has been exponential.” This same model will be used as they move forward to improve writing. The self-study report did not indicate the degree to which these strategies have impacted student learning.

Example VC *Pre-write*
C2: Instruction Criterion – Rigorous and Relevant Instruction

Possible **Strength:**

Leadership and staff - professional development program itself – staff and data driven, research-based – build internal expertise to further student growth

Possible **Growth Area:**

Leadership and staff - Continue and expand professional development program – writing

Evidence (only self-study report in pre-work)

Example  VC  Pre-write
C2. Instruction

Current Knowledge

Professional Development Cycles, including Peer Observation:

Over the past three years, teachers have participated in professional development sessions led by teachers. They have learned and practiced a variety of strategies to engage and challenge students. Using both peer and administrative observations as checks, a majority of staff regularly use two to five different strategies during each class period to more actively engage students. Writing, speaking, questioning, and responding strategies are all incorporated. Teachers openly speak with one another about their own growth and continuing areas of weakness. Students are clear in expressing that “things are different all the time” and yet “all the teachers do sort of the same things. That makes it easier for me.” This model will be used as staff moves more directly to improve writing.
C2. Instruction

*Current Knowledge*

**Strength:** School leadership and staff’s close working relationship and respect that have helped produce an inexpensive, viable, and highly effective professional development program designed to support high quality student learning.

**Growth Area:** Working with district leaders, School leadership and staff expand their strong professional development program to include writing strategies, assignments, and assessment tools to support high quality academic writing for all students.

**Evidence:** Self-Study Report, classroom and professional development observations, conversations with students and teachers.
School and Chair: Previsit Discussion Areas virtually...

- Logistics and The Schedule
  - Ensure school understands technological needs
  - Identify school’s technology support personnel
  - School’s online conference space and capacity
  - Identification of meeting participants prior to and during a meeting
- Suggested availability of Pre-Visit Videos
- Classroom Observations and Support Needed for Virtual Visits
  - Clarify of platform to observe classes
  - Identify of school personnel needed to facilitate technology during observations
  - Identification of classes to be observed
VC Chair and Visiting Committee Members ensure...

- **the VC members have the capability to use the virtual platform and have participated in training and orientation prior to the visit.**

- **the VC members understand the expectations of virtual visits:**
  - regular communication with VC chair and members; flexibility during the visit, visit occurring in a conducive location, e.g., quiet, no interruptions;
  - adequate bandwidth and technology, i.e., a computer with a camera or ipad/tablet;
  - addressed issue of substitute coverage with administration.
Schedule

Monday – Thursday (usually)

Note that for virtual visits, the daily schedule may be different from the sample in the FOL Manual.

The VC Chair will work with the school to determine the daily schedule.
Virtual Visit: The Schedule

Required meetings and observations will still occur:

- Chair previsit work with school and visiting committee members

- Chair and school reference the suggested in-person schedule but will adapt based on school context, i.e., some meetings may occur prior to visit dates or be combined

- Important to know the names of all meeting attendees
Virtual Visit: The Schedule

WASC Full Visit Expectations

• Daily meeting between the principal/school leader and VC chair

• Daily meeting between the Leadership Team and the Visiting Committee

• Meetings with all Focus Groups—all members (may have to be two meetings)

• Separate meetings with students, parents, teachers, counselors, support staff, governing authority (e.g., district/complex area) and other meetings as needed
Virtual Visit: Observations of School in Action during the Accreditation Visit

• School provide Master Schedule (virtual and/or on-site)

• School and VC chair establish a schedule for VC member to observe live teaching and learning—ensuring a quality stratified sample

• VC chair and school select a stratified group of classes based on grade levels, school programs, subject areas, types of course, student groups and other important issues (Suggested time frame is 15-20 minutes but can vary with type of class and school)

• School and VC chair work together on best platform and video device and how it is positioned
School: Previsit Discussion Areas (Virtual or In-Person Visits)

- The Visit Schedule — developed collaboratively
  - 2 people at all schoolwide focus groups (1 ½–2 hours)
  - Daily leadership team meeting with entire visiting team
  - Daily chair-principal meeting
  - Visit stratified random sampling of classes (keep record)
- Examples of other meetings based on school
  - Parents
  - Students
  - Support staff
  - Administrators
  - Subject Areas/Departments/Programs
  - Counseling Dept., Special Ed, AVID, Title I
  - Other individual or groups

School Visit
ACS WASC VC Members Strengthen School’s Core Work — Improving Student Learning
School Meetings and Dialogue: Questions and Techniques
Meetings: Committees

Dept./Subject Area Groups, Data Teams, PLCs, Other Groups

Leadership Team

Schoolwide Focus Groups
Meetings: Developing Quality Questions

• Daily Leadership Meetings
• Daily Chair meets with Head
• 1 ½ – 2 hour meetings with Focus Groups
• Meetings with many other groups
Sample Areas

Powerful questions about
- Action plan
- All students
- Student learner needs
- Criteria
- GLOs
- Academic standards
- Evidence analyzed
Sample Areas (cont.)

Powerful questions about

- Understanding and use of data
- Modifying learning and teaching
- Feedback to students
- Coaching of colleagues in new strategies
- Intended impact on student learning
- Follow-up process
Sample Discussion Starters

• Help us understand...
• Could you clarify...?
• We recognize that...
• We understand from the self-study that.... What led to this conclusion?
• Is this characteristic of ....?
• What factors contributed to these results?
• What elements of the student/ community profile are related to....?

See Reference Card 2
Sample Questions:

• What have you learned?
• What insights have you had since you prepared the summary?
• Talk about evidence that led to the conclusions made.
• What have you learned about student learning and success?
• What can you as a school do to improve learning for each and every student?

See Reference Card 2
Strategies

Be prepared

Techniques
• Open ended
• Presume they’re doing it
• Follow-up questions
• Wait time
Meeting Strategies

Be on time for the meeting!

Come prepared with a clear agenda

Start on time and assign a timekeeper

Have participants introduce themselves

Listen

You can end a bit early but never late!
Questioning Strategies

LEVELS OF QUESTIONING

I. Icebreaker or warm up question
II. Questions for clarification for the VC
III. Questions for clarification for the School
IV. Questions to extend the school’s thinking
V. Closing question
Level I: Icebreaker or warm-up questions

How did your committee organize for the process?

In what ways did this process work for your committee?

What were the “ah-haws” or major learnings from the process?
Level II: Questions for clarification for the VC

In your report, you mention the term, “XXXX”. Could you explain what that is?

On page 23 of the Self-Study, there’s a reference to the XYZ Reading Program. Could someone tell us a little more about this program?

How is the program, “Success” working for “At Risk” students?
Level II: Questions for clarification for the school

In what ways has this process helped the focus the school on students’ learning? How do you know that Program X is working? What evidence is most compelling?

On page 27, you indicate that assessment is an area of strength, What led you to this conclusion?
Level IV: Questions to extend the school’s thinking

What would happen if you had available a computer-based data management system?

For students who do not succeed in the XYZ program, what other options might you consider?

What other strategies might you try to...?
Level V: Closing questions

Based on our conversation today, what do you think would be your next steps after we (VC) leave?

What might you do differently next time you go through the FOL process?

On page 27, you indicate that assessment is an area of strength, What led you to this conclusion?
Thursday

VC and Final Virtual Leadership Team Meeting
Thursday

VC and Virtual Leadership/Whole School Presentation
Visiting Committee Synthesis Meetings

What should the VC include at these daily meetings based on key concepts of the criteria, the Self-Study, and findings during the visit?

How do you ensure the report reflects accurate school findings and a “Whole” Visiting Committee view?
Team Consensus
What’s the evidence?
VC Report—Chapter IV

- Schoolwide strengths
- Schoolwide critical areas for follow-up
  - Support identified areas
  - Strengthen identified areas
  - Address additional areas
# Tables of Strengths and Key Issues

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<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Instruction</th>
<th>Assessment &amp; Accountability</th>
<th>School Culture &amp; Student Support</th>
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<tr>
<td>Copy Strengths from each category</td>
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<td>Copy Key Issues from each category</td>
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VC Schoolwide Strengths

Who?  What?  Why?

What would like to see your own school’s report in relation to clarity and specificity — understanding by all?
What type of strengths would you want to be in a report for your school?

• Students have access to rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum where they are required to think critically and write across all subject areas.

• The school has a strong and appropriate vision/mission to which it very intentionally aligns its schoolwide learner outcomes, LCAP, and messaging and to which all stakeholders share a strong commitment.

• Technology

• CTE pathways

• Rigorous, focused and engaging instruction

• There is an established culture of academic success and rigor.

• The students are actively involved in the community.
Sample Critical Area for Follow-up: Reminder

- Those areas that support areas already identified in the action plan sections
- Those areas that **strengthen** areas already identified in the action plan sections
- Potential additional areas not addressed by school
VC Report: Critical Areas for Follow-up — CLARITY

Reminder: Include the “Who”, “What” and “Why”
The leadership, instructional staff, and other stakeholders increase the use of the results from analyzing student achievement data in modifying instruction, particularly in the areas of reading, writing, math and critical thinking skills.

Sample critical area for follow-up
VC Report: Critical Areas for Follow-up — CLARITY

A Practice: Examine the sample critical areas for follow-up and determine what would make it clearer for the school.

Reminder: Include the “Who”, “What” and “Why”
Critical Areas for Follow-up: What is MISSING?

• Use data from common formative and summative assessments to reteach and differentiate instruction to increase student learning outcomes.

• Develop effective assessment tools and rubrics for the schoolwide student goals.
Critical Areas for Follow-up: Critique and Rewrite

• The development of a systematic review process to assess the impact of educational programs and materials on student learning.

• The school needs to explore professional development that meets the instructional needs of the school.
Virtual Visit: The VC Report

• Visiting Committee Chair leaves final list of Schoolwide Strengths and Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement (Critical Areas for Follow-up) with school leadership

• Visiting Committee Chair sends final report within 10 working days of visit to school
Alignment: Status Rationale based on Findings
What’s the RIGHT status for this school?

Is there adequate evidence?

Does our writing support our recommendation?

Have our conversations supported our recommendation?
Accreditation Status Factors: 
VC Recommendation and Commission Action

To what extent is the school demonstrating quality student achievement/improvement?
ACS WASC/HIDOE Accreditation Status

Status based on a school demonstrating the following factors...

(Visiting Team reaches consensus on rating for each factor to facilitate recommended status)

- Involvement and Collaboration of all
- Acceptable Progress by All Students
- Each Criterion within Categories A-E
- Alignment of Academic Plan to areas of greatest need
- Use of prior accreditation findings/other pertinent data
- Capacity to implement/monitor Academic Plan
Short-short-form of the analytical summary of self-study looking at “to what extent” the school meets the criteria

plus rationale for status
Standards-based Student Learning Instruction: Student Engagement that supports high achievement for all students (C2)

• Visiting Committee Rating: Somewhat Effective

• Narrative Rationale: The visiting committee did not observe a high rate of student-centered, technology driven, or hands-on types of instruction. Most of the teaching happening in the classrooms that was observed during the visit was very traditional, lecture style teaching. Traditionally underrepresented minorities, ELs and Special Education students are particularly struggling to achieve.
Accreditation Status

• Six-Year Accreditation Status
  - Progress report at mid-cycle
  - Progress and one-day visit at mid-cycle
  - Progress Report and two-day visit at mid-cycle

• One- or Two-Year Probationary Status with an in-depth progress report and a two-day visit

• Accreditation Status Withheld
Visiting Committee Report

Ballot and Documentation & Justification

Public

Confidential
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<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Be a team player</td>
<td>• Try to solve their problems; diagnostic not prescriptive</td>
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<td>• Validate and extend, not evaluate</td>
<td>• Argue over words; ensure ideas are captured and clear</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Support, not judge</td>
<td>• Focus on small things</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Celebrate successes</td>
<td>• Talk about your school</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Prepare and plan</td>
<td>• Overeat or oversleep</td>
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<td>• Listen</td>
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<td>• Focus on important issues</td>
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<td>• Work for consensus</td>
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<td>• Work toward the action plan</td>
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On the visit
Reflection: How can I best prepare?

• What are my priorities?
• What are the critical elements for a successful visit?
Thank You

Need assistance? Have a question? Need clarification?

Contact Information:
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We Are Student Centered