Visiting Committee Member Checklist

Previsit Preparation

___1. Receive the first letter from the visiting committee chairperson that addresses:
   a. Requests for preferred areas of coverage during the visit
   b. Training sessions schedule reminders
   c. The review of accreditation materials.

___2. Attend WASC member training through a workshop or webinar.

___3. Study the school description, the *WASC International Focus on Learning* manual, and the reference cards.

___4. Become aware of the outcomes of the self-study followed by the school:
   - The involvement and collaboration of all staff and other stakeholders to support student achievement
   - The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards
   - The analysis of data about students and student achievement
   - The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and WASC criteria
   - The alignment of a long-range action plan to the school's areas of need; the capacity to implement and monitor the accomplishment of the plan.

___5. Review the WASC criteria, the criteria guide questions, suggested areas to examine, appropriate academic standards, and educational references.

___6. Receive additional instructions from chairperson, including:
   a. Writing assignments
   b. Review of the criteria as the self-study report is analyzed
   c. Members will be asked to provide questions and comments for all sections of the report on the previsit preparation worksheet; members will also be asked to write tentative narrative statements for assigned sections of the school report; the chair should receive these prior to the initial team meeting in order to compile a tentative visiting committee report (Many chairs will be using Google Drive for the previsit preparation worksheets and the draft visiting committee report)
   d. Visit schedule.

___7. After receiving the self-study report, complete the previsit preparation:
   a. Review the criteria with respect to the analysis of the self-study report; study other pertinent materials (e.g., academic standards)
   b. Compare the school's findings to the concepts of the criteria, the critical learner needs, and the schoolwide learner outcomes; critique the schoolwide action plan.

To what extent:

- Do the school's findings and supporting evidence provide a sound basis for determining the effectiveness of the school programs based on the criteria concepts?
- Was the analysis of the school program done in relation to the critical learner needs, the schoolwide learner outcomes, the academic standards, and the concepts of the criteria?
- Does the schoolwide action plan address the major identified growth areas and enhance the learning of all students as identified in the student/community profile?
- Are the critical learner needs and the schoolwide learner outcomes being addressed through the action plan?
- Is the implementation of a standards-based system being addressed through the action plan?
- Has the school integrated other initiatives to create one "umbrella" schoolwide action plan?
- Is the action plan feasible and realistic? Are resources considered for each action plan section?
- Do the ways of assessing progress include the analysis of student learning?
- Is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and systemwide?
- Is there a sound follow-up process that will be used to monitor the accomplishment of the action plan?

c. Write tentative narrative statements in response to the criteria including the relationship of the concepts of the criteria/indicators to the schoolwide learner outcomes and critical learner needs. Include questions regarding issues, concerns, clarifications and evidence that should be pursued during the visit. **Send these to visiting committee chair prior to the visit**.

___8. Ensure that the chair has received in a timely manner all previsit preparation questions and comments for the entire self-study report and the tentative narrative statements for the assigned sections of the report.

___9. Receive the final communication from the chairperson that:

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

___10. Bring the following materials electronically or in hard copy to visit: (Note: Many chairs are using Google Drive so the templates and other materials are already available for sharing online.)

a. WASC International Focus on Learning manual
b. Accreditation Status Determination Worksheet
c. Reference cards
d. Self-study report

e. All notes
f. Credit card or cash to cover reimbursable expenses.

___11. Arrive on time for the initial meeting and have no other commitments during the visit.

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

___1. Demonstrate an interest in the school's welfare and express a desire to be helpful. Establish a rapport with the staff.

___2. Use the concepts of the WASC criteria as a comparison base throughout entire visit.

___3. Look at the quality of the program experienced by students and evidence of successful student learning — the degree to which the schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards are being accomplished.

___4. Look for evidence of an ongoing process for school improvement.

___5. Let the program unfold: don't prejudge. Validate, verify, and document. Be aware of personal biases that can influence observations.

___6. Structure the gathering of evidence (class/program, observations, interviews, examination of student work and other information, dialogue with Home Groups) so the needed appropriate information is obtained.

___7. Assure teachers that classroom visits are not evaluative but are planned to observe the general instructional atmosphere and climate of the school.

___8. Frame open-ended questions to all school committee members and individuals to elicit information without reflecting a value judgment.

___9. Allow adequate time for responses and give appropriate feedback to responses to questions.

___10. Concentrate on being a good listener. Be aware of nonverbal feedback.

___11. Meet and lead discussions with the school self-study committees that are pertinent to your assigned areas of writing responsibility.

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

___12. Don't allow pressure groups or individuals to distract you from the main task and the schedule.

___13. Make every effort to avoid involvement in school issues that are not pertinent to the self-study and visit.

___14. Work cooperatively with all other visiting committee members as findings are discussed and decisions made.

___15. Write quality analytical responses according to the suggested guidelines. Make sure they reflect the important concepts of the criteria and indicators and are supported by evidence.

___16. Give feedback to all staff, noting the regular meetings with the Leadership Team.

___17. Meet daily with the Leadership Team to present and thoroughly discuss the synthesis of the concepts of the criteria, the self-study report, and the findings during the visit, as reflected in the draft visiting committee report. Continually, discuss the school's next steps as outlined in the proposed schoolwide action plan.

___18. Meet with other visiting committee members to investigate any issues or questions raised during the Leadership Team meeting.

___19. Make necessary visiting committee report modifications and finalize the report.

___20. Individually review each WASC accreditation status factor. Individually make decisions regarding the quality of the school's educational program with respect to the WASC criteria and the other factors impacting the accreditation status.

___21. Participate in the visiting committee discussion of the Accreditation Status Recommendation with respect to the WASC criteria categories and all findings.

___22. Assist the chair in preparing the confidential visiting committee "Documentation and Justification Statement" for the Commission ensuring that the correlation is evident between the recommended status and the visiting committee report.

___23. Complete the expense voucher and submit to the chair for submission to the school for reimbursement. (Keep a copy of all forms and receipts.)

___24. Complete and submit the chair evaluation form.

___25. Participate in the presentation of the findings to the entire staff. The recommended accreditation status is confidential; do not imply the recommended accreditation status.

___26. Support and encourage the school in its ongoing school improvement process.