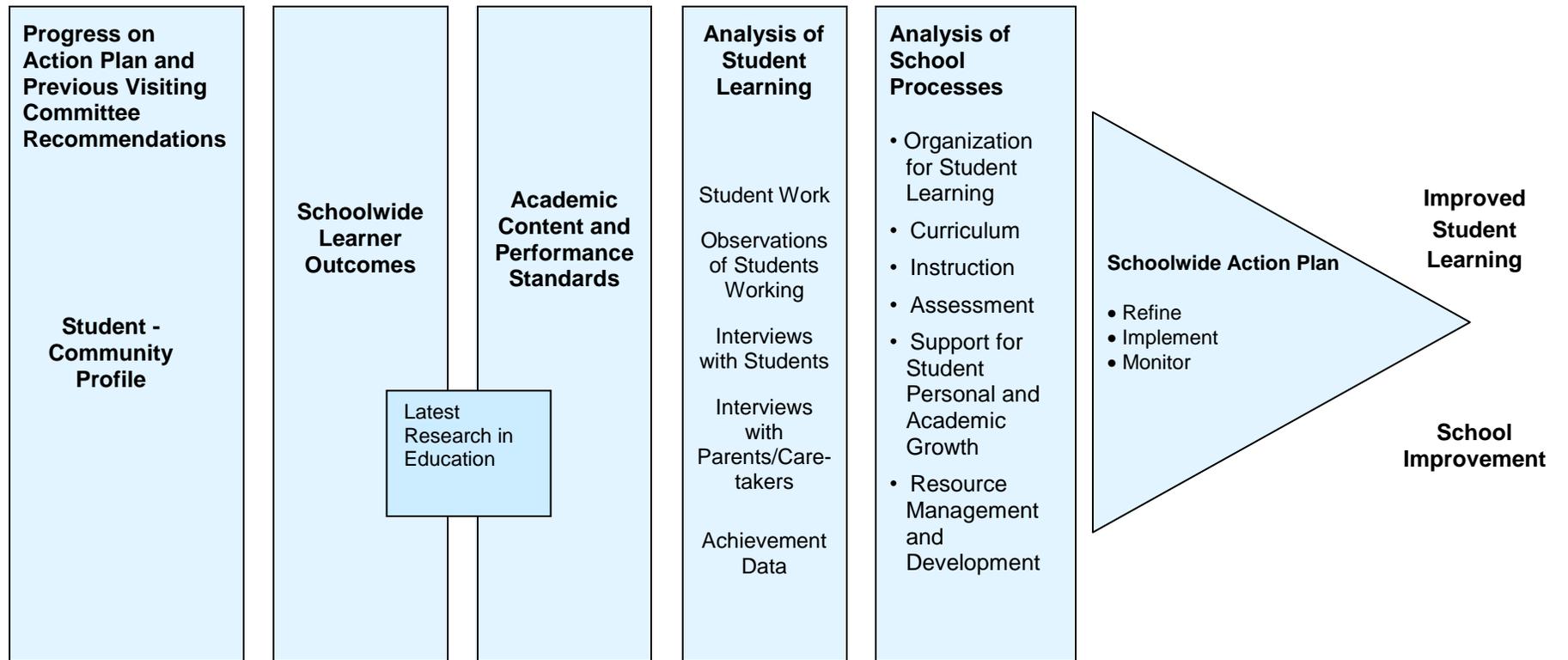# The Self-Study

Explanation of Self-Study Tasks

The five tasks presented in this section assist the school in accomplishing the *five outcomes of the self-study*. They represent a model self-study process that schools may modify as long as they adhere to these outcomes. The matrix of self-study outcomes and tasks, the self-study process diagram, the suggested timeline, and the self-study format will also be helpful in understanding this relationship of the tasks to the outcomes.

MODEL PROCESS	Expected Outcomes of ACS WASC Focus on Learning Process				
	1 Involvement of Stakeholders	**2** Clarification of Learner Outcomes and Academic Standards	**3** Analysis of Data about Students and Student Achievement	**4** Assessment of Quality of School Program and Student Learning ACS WASC Criteria: - Organization - Curriculum - Instruction - Assessment - Student Support - Resource Management and Development	**5** Alignment of Schoolwide Action Plan and Capacity to Implement and Monitor Process
Task 1 Refine the student/community profile, based on analyzed and disaggregated data. Clarify the schoolwide learner outcomes.	✓	✓	✓		
Task 2 Summarize the progress based upon the schoolwide action plan that included critical areas of follow-up from the last full self-study.	✓				✓
Task 3 Summarize implications of the data; identify 2 to 3 critical learner needs; determine important related questions for Home/Focus groups.	✓				✓
Task 4 Evaluate the quality of the school program in relation to the ACS WASC criteria with emphasis on the identified critical learner needs and correlated schoolwide learner outcomes. Synthesize the information, determine strengths and growth needs, and identify potential action steps.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Task 5 Revise the comprehensive schoolwide action plan. Define schoolwide and subgroup growth targets. Establish an ongoing follow-up process to monitor implementation and accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan.	✓	✓			✓

ACS WASC FOCUS ON LEARNING PROCESS

Progress on Action Plan and Previous Visiting Committee Recommendations	Schoolwide Learner Outcomes	Academic Content and Performance Standards	Analysis of Student Learning	Analysis of School Processes

Progress on Action Plan and Previous Visiting Committee Recommendations

Student - Community Profile

Schoolwide Learner Outcomes

Latest Research in Education

Academic Content and Performance Standards

Analysis of Student Learning

Student Work

Observations of Students Working

Interviews with Students

Interviews with Parents/Care-takers

Achievement Data

Analysis of School Processes

• Organization for Student Learning

• Curriculum

• Instruction

• Assessment

• Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth

• Resource Management and Development

Schoolwide Action Plan

• Refine
• Implement
• Monitor

Improved Student Learning

School Improvement

Expected Outcomes of the Improvement Process

1 ➔ The involvement and collaboration of all staff and other stakeholders to support student achievement.

2 ➔ The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards.

3 ➔ The analysis of data about students and student achievement.

4 ➔ The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and ACS WASC criteria.

5 ➔ 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.

Task 1: Refine student/community profile based on the analyzed and disaggregated data; clarify the schoolwide learner outcomes

➔ **Note**: The purpose of this profile is to provide a source of basic data that can be used for other statewide program processes.

Product

- **Task 1**: Self-Study Report: Chapter I: **"**Student/Community Profile — Data and Findings"

  Provide findings, noting trends, irregular patterns or anomalies for the data, including longitudinal and disaggregated data (see profile guide)

  - Demographic data
  - Student performance data
  - Perception data.

Appendices:

A. Results of student questionnaire/interviews
B. Results of parent/community questionnaire/interviews
C. Master schedule
D. Additional details of school programs
E. Graduation requirements
F. Any pertinent additional data (or have on exhibit during the visit)
G. Budgetary information, including budget pages from the school's action plan
H. Glossary of terms unique to the school.

Participants

- Leadership Team and/or Student Profile Committee
- All stakeholders (suggestion: use Home Groups, Schoolwide Focus Groups, or total staff).

Procedures

1. Leadership Team and/or Student Profile Committee:

   a. Review the student/community profile guide and the current student/community profile. (See the guide on the following pages.)

   The student/community profile should include both *demographic data*, describing the school, its students, and staff and performance and *outcome data*, describing the students' achievements. A summary of information or *perceptions* collected about how stakeholders view the school may also be included.

   b. Gather the needed additional demographic and student performance data.

    c.   Present data through the use of appropriate charts, tables, and graphs.

    d.   Disaggregate, as appropriate, interpret and analyze the data.

    e.   Provide *findings*, noting trends, irregular patterns or anomalies for the data, including longitudinal and disaggregated data. Include any student and/or parent survey data.

    f.   Include data about one or two schoolwide learner outcomes, at a minimum.

2. Leadership Team and/or Student Profile Committee:

Review the core values and beliefs, the vision, the mission and existing schoolwide learner outcomes. Use the profile data and discuss the critical learner needs, future challenges, and needed competencies.

- What are the current and future learning needs of the students?
- What does it mean to be an educated person?
- What is the most effective preparation of students for their future?

Include the schoolwide learner outcomes in the profile with pertinent comments about modifications.

Refine the schoolwide learner outcomes and indicators as needed. Include the schoolwide learner outcomes and any pertinent comments in the profile. (**Note**: New schools should describe the process used to determine or clarify these.)

3. Leadership Team and Student Profile Committee

Prepare a draft overall summary of what these data sources tell about student achievement and the school community. This will be updated after preparation of the progress report (Task 2) and the dialogue with all certificated staff and other stakeholders (Task 3).

- What are the implications of the data with respect to student performance?
- Select two to three critical learner needs based on the data, noting the correlated schoolwide learner outcomes.
- List important questions that have been raised by the analysis of the student performance and demographic data.

➔ **Note**: The identified critical learner needs and important questions will be used in the Home and Focus Group work.

✓ *Self-Check Questions*

- Has the Leadership Team gathered and analyzed all required and other pertinent data to identify the characteristics and trends of achievement of ALL the students?
- Has the Leadership Team produced a user-friendly profile for all stakeholders?
- Have the certificated staff members and other stakeholders scheduled a time for discussion of the profile? See Task 3.

- Has the Leadership Team involved the stakeholders in a review of the current vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes in relation to the current learner needs and future challenges for the students in order to be globally competent?

- Have the stakeholders refined the measurable indicators of the schoolwide learner outcomes that define their quality accomplishment?

- Do the stakeholders understand how to use the profile data, including the vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes, to guide further inquiry about student achievement and the school programs?

ACS WASC STUDENT/COMMUNITY PROFILE GUIDE

➔ **Note**: In the Appendix, include the master schedule, copies of any surveys used and summaries of results, additional information about specialized programs, and the school budget pages. Other information may also be included such as the glossary of terms unique to the school.

General Background and History

1. Community
   a. Brief description of the community served by the school
   b. Family and community trends
   c. Parent/community organizations
   d. Community foundation programs
   e. School/business relationships.
2. ACS WASC accreditation history for school
3. School purpose, e.g., beliefs, vision, and mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes.

➔ **Note**: New schools also should describe the process used to develop the schoolwide learner outcomes; other schools should comment on any revisions or refinements.

School Program Data

- Provide a succinct summary of all types of online instruction and specialized programs such as IB Diploma Program, Advanced Placement, and school/college partnerships.

  Online Instruction: Address all the areas listed below (See Key Terminology for definitions)

  - Types of online instruction
  - Learning management system
  - Hardware and software requirements
  - Teacher and support staff qualifications
  - Personnel involved in the instructional process
  - Curriculum offered both onsite or outsourced
  - Types of instruction offered, synchronous or asynchronous
  - Methods and processes used to ensure that all students have access to the instructional programs necessary for learning success
  - Types of assessments and assessment processes
  - School culture for the online environment, including types of school and community activities, opportunities for student involvement, and participation data
  - Orientation process for incoming students and parents to understand expectations for the online learning environment
  - Student/Teacher interaction on a typical day

- Student support services, including response to intervention (RTI), academic counseling and support for equal access, personal counseling, college/career preparation support, and health services.

Focused Programs:

Address all the areas listed below for each program. Some information may be generic and part of the overall school program and will be addressed accordingly.

- Types of instruction and extended learning opportunities
- Specific technical requirements
- Teacher and support staff qualifications
- Curriculum offered both onsite or outsourced
- Types of assessments and assessment process
- How programs support college, career and other goals
- Orientation process for incoming students to understand expectations
- Frequency of student/teacher interaction
- Support for equal access, academic and personal counseling, college/career preparation support, and health services
- Partnerships including business, industry, and community, including higher education.

Demographic Data

1. Enrollment
   a. Grade level
   b. Gender
   c. Ethnicity or Nationality
   d. Predominate primary languages other than English (e.g., Spanish, Hmong)
   e. Special needs and other focused programs (e.g., online instruction, college/careers, IB, AP, Honors).
2. Numbers of English language learners
3. Attendance
   a. Mobility or transient rate
   b. Average daily rate of attendance
4. Parent education level
5. Description of the safety conditions, cleanliness, and adequacy of school facilities
6. Staff
   a. Number of certificated staff and classified staff, include number of qualified personnel for counseling and other pupil support services and substitutes
   b. Percent of teachers instructing outside credentialed areas and include an explanation
   c. Number with advanced degrees

      d. Total number of years in education

      e. Gender

      f. Ethnicity or Nationality

      g. Attendance rates of teachers

      h. Number and assignment of teaching assistants or paraprofessionals).

7. Professional development programs/activities and numbers participating
(e.g., training in content areas or in instructional approaches, departmental activities, university programs)

8. Content of staff development and numbers participating (e.g., programs, activities, and numbers)

9. Student participation in co-curricular activities and extra-curricular activities

10. School financial support

      a. Expenditures per pupil

      b. Monies from other funding sources, e.g., grants, foundations.

Student Performance Data

Comment on findings, including trends, irregular patterns or anomalies for the data areas.

➔ **Note**: Data should be disaggregated to reflect the achievement of all significant subgroups including English learners and Special Education. Three years of data, if possible, should be included. Include national and international scores for other comparative points. Examples of student achievement data include the following:

1. External assessments, e.g., CAT, ITBS, ERB, MAPS.

2. Local assessments, e.g., end of course examinations.

3. College Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and/or ACT results, including numbers of students taking the exams.

4. Advanced placement test results, including the number of students enrolled in AP courses and the percentages taking the exams and the percentage of students passing exams.

5. International Baccalaureate results

6. Post-enrollment data

Schoolwide Learner Outcomes

- Select one or two of the schoolwide learner outcomes

- Using data generated in this profile (perception data, results of examining student work, observations, etc.), comment on the degree to which the students are achieving the identified schoolwide learner outcomes.

Perception Data

- Results of interviews, surveys, etc. about how stakeholders view the school (students, parents, staff, community).

Task 2:   Summarize progress since the previous full self-study

Product

- Self-Study Report
  Chapter II: "Progress Report"

Summary of progress on the entire action plan that incorporated the critical areas of follow-up from the last full self-study.

➔ **Note**: Have available for review by the visiting committee prior progress reports and earlier (annual) versions of the schoolwide action plan.

Participants

- Leadership Team
- All Stakeholders.

Procedures

1. **Significant Developments**: Describe any significant developments that have had a major impact on the school and/or specific curricular programs since the last full visit.

2. **Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up**: List the schoolwide critical areas for follow-up from the visiting committee report for the prior full visit and any recommendations from subsequent visits/reports.

   ➔ **Note**: Schools that have had initial visits should respond to the recommendations left at that time.

3. **Ongoing Follow-up Process**: Comment on the process for implementing and monitoring.

   Comment on how the student/community profile and the annual progress reports, including the ACS WASC mid-cycle (third year) report, have been reviewed and discussed annually by all stakeholders as part of the ongoing school improvement focusing on student learning.

4. **Progress, Evidence, Impact on Student Learning for Action Plan Sections or Goals**:
   a. For each current action plan goal or section, indicate how it relates to one or more of the critical areas for follow-up or any additional recommendations. (i.e., cross-reference).

   b. Comment on the accomplishment of each current action plan section or goal, including how each area has met identified growth targets and contributed to the accomplishment of the critical learner needs and one or more schoolwide learner outcomes for all students. Include:
      - How was the goal determined?
      - What impact has the goal had on student learning?
      - To what extent have the action plan growth targets been met over the past years?

   c. Cite evidence; reference the student performance data as appropriate.

5. **Critical Areas for Follow-up not currently in the Action Plan**: Comment separately on the critical areas for follow-up that have already been addressed and are currently not in the plan. In addition, comment on those "just do its" or isolated critical areas for follow-up that were not included in the ongoing schoolwide action plan. Comment on the impact of these critical areas for follow-up on student learning. Cite evidence.

✔ *Self-Check Questions*

- Did the school show how the schoolwide critical areas of follow-up and recommendations identified by visiting committees since the last full self-study were integrated into the action plan?

- Did the school address each section of the action plan?

- Did the progress report include data that indicates whether school staff and students met established growth targets?

- Does the report show how each section impacted student accomplishment of the critical learner needs and one or more schoolwide learner outcomes?

- Did the school show how other critical areas of follow-up were addressed that were not part of the action plan?

Task 3: Summarize the implications of the profile and progress data; identify 2 to 3 critical learner needs; determine important related questions for Home/Focus groups

Product

- Task 3: Self-Study Report: Chapter III: "Student/Community Profile — Overall Summary from Analysis of Profile and Progress Data"

    1. What are the implications of the profile and progress data with respect to student performance since the prior self-study (or initial visit)?

    2. Based on past performance and current data, select two to three critical learner needs, noting the correlated schoolwide learner outcomes.

    3. List 3–4 important questions that have been raised by the analysis of the student performance, demographic, and perception data and the progress data. (These will be used in the Home and Focus Group work.)

Participants

- Leadership Team and/or Student Profile Committee

- All Stakeholders (suggestion: use Home Groups, Schoolwide Focus Groups, or total staff).

Procedures

1. Leadership Team:

    a. Disseminate the draft profile and progress report (Chapters I & II) to all certificated staff and other stakeholders; hold group discussions based on the schoolwide learner outcomes, and current knowledge about critical learner needs.

       Use the following questions:

       - Who are the students?
       - How are they performing?
       - Who's achieving? Who's not achieving?
       - What has been accomplished? What is in progress?

    b. Have the staff and other stakeholders generate from the discussion their overall implications, critical learner needs, and important questions. This will be an important verification of the draft work done by the Leadership Team and Profile Committee on these areas.

    c. Determine if there is agreement on the identified critical learner needs and important questions. Are there additions? (**Note**: These critical learner needs and questions will be addressed through the Home and Schoolwide Focus Group dialogue.)

    d. Use the implications, critical learner needs, and questions identified by the staff and additional Leadership/Profile Committee notes to finalize the summary.

e. Determine if there needs to be any further modification of the schoolwide learner outcomes in relation to inclusion of the critical learner needs. Make appropriate modifications and include those in Chapter I, the Student/Community Profile.

➔ **Note**: The identified critical learner needs and important questions will be used in the Home and Focus Group work.

2. Leadership Team: Finalize and distribute the profile, the progress report and summary (Chapters I–III) to all stakeholders for use throughout the self-study process and include in the self-study report.

➔ **Note**: The Focus and Home Groups will use the profile, the progress report, and especially the summary data related to the identified critical learner needs and important questions. The profile and summary will be updated as additional data becomes available throughout the self-study process.

✓ *Self-Check Questions*

- Have the certificated staff members and other stakeholders discussed the profile and progress since the last full self-study or initial visit?

- Has the school obtained input from all members of the school community as the implications and identification of the critical learner needs are determined based on the data and progress?

- Has there been discussion of the relationship of the 2–3 critical learner needs to the schoolwide learner outcomes and descriptors?

- Is there commitment to accomplishing the school's vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes (including critical learner needs) from all certified staff, all students, and other stakeholder groups?

- Have the 3–4 important questions been determined that will be discussed within the Home/Focus groups?

- Do the stakeholders understand how to use the profile to guide further inquiry about student achievement and the school programs?

Task 4: Evaluate the quality of the school program in relation to the ACS WASC criteria with emphasis on schoolwide learner outcomes; synthesize the information, determine strengths and growth needs

Product

- Self-Study Report
  Chapter IV: "Self-Study Findings"

For each category of criteria, prepare a brief analytical summary that includes:

1. Findings and supporting evidence for each of the criteria guide questions
2. A list of strengths
3. A list of prioritized growth areas.

➔ **Note**: The four criteria categories are:

A. Organization for Student Learning

B. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

C. Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth

D. Resource Management and Development

Have available pertinent evidence for review by visiting committee. This includes samples of representative student work that have been analyzed.

Participants

- Leadership Team
- Focus Groups
- Home Groups.

➔ **Note**: Over a period of months there will be meetings of Home and Focus Groups, the results of which are mutually shared with each other. If these are carefully planned, there do not need to be an excessive number of either Home or Focus Group meetings. Home Groups are typically organized around curricular areas and other roles/responsibilities, such as data groups or vertical areas of emphasis. Notes or summaries from Home Groups that included the analysis of student work based on the critical learner needs will be used by Focus Groups. Focus Groups are organized around the ACS WASC criteria categories and concentrate on the analysis of the school program, emphasizing the critical learner needs, related schoolwide learner outcomes, and the important questions about students and learning.

Procedures

1. **Schoolwide Focus Groups**: (**Note**: Ensure all stakeholders have discussed the student/community profile and 2-3 critical learner needs.)
Review and discuss all four categories of criteria in order to understand that these concepts are guidelines for systematic school improvement. The focus is on student accomplishment of the schoolwide learner outcomes and critical learner needs. These criteria will be used to evaluate the school program in relation to the school's vision, mission, schoolwide learner outcomes, and critical learner needs.

   ➔ **Note**: Each Focus Group should use the prompts and indicators related to group's designated category and provide supporting evidence.

2. **Schoolwide Focus Groups**:
   a. Discuss in detail the criteria, indicators, and prompts for the assigned criteria category and decide what is already known from experience at the school.
   b. Review the profile and progress report data and summary about the implications, critical learner needs, and important questions.
   c. Based on the criteria/indicators/prompts, decide **what data/information/evidence** is needed to determine what currently exists and **its effectiveness.**
   d. Review the list of areas to analyze and examine for each criterion to assist with this discussion.
   e. Particularly, decide what is needed from all the Home Groups.

   ➔ **Note**: Home Groups must conduct a schoolwide analysis of student work and student engagement in learning based on the identified critical learner needs and related schoolwide learner outcomes. Written conclusions from this study must be summarized and shared with all Focus Groups, especially, Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment and Accountability.

   **What have the Home Groups learned from examining
   student work related to the critical learner needs?**

3. **Home Groups**:

   Gather and analyze the data and information that is needed by the Focus Groups, including examining of student, observing student engagement, conducting walkthroughs, and interviewing or surveying students.

4. **Home Groups**:

   Share findings with appropriate Schoolwide Focus Groups. (**Note**: This can be done through notes and evidence for the Focus Group representative from each Home Group and also through shared documents.)

5. **Schoolwide Focus Groups**:

   Discuss and analyze the Home Group information gathered and analyzed about the selected critical learner needs, related schoolwide learner outcomes, and academic standards. Then examine the school program in relation to the ACS WASC criteria/indicators/prompts assigned to the Focus Group. (Note: The Leadership Team can assist the Organization for Student Learning and Resource Management and

Development Focus Groups with the following criteria: A1, School Purpose, A2, Governance, D1, Resources, and D2, Resource Planning.)

What do we know about the impact this part of the school's program and operation has on student learning?

6. **Schoolwide Focus Groups**:

Decide what additional pertinent data is needed from the Home Groups and other sources to compare the school program to the designated ACS WASC criteria/indicators/prompts, especially in relation to the identified critical learner needs, related schoolwide learner outcomes, and academic standards.

7. **Home Groups**:

All members gather and analyze the additional requested information.

8. **Schoolwide Focus Groups**:

   a. Review all evidence about the designated ACS WASC criteria/indicators.

   b. Synthesize the information and data analyzed.

   c. Use the prompts to summarize the analytical findings and related evidence for the criteria and indicators, including what has been learned about the critical learner needs and important related questions.

   d. For the assigned criteria category, identify major areas of strength and prioritized growth areas that show a direct correlation with the written findings and supporting evidence.

✓ *Self-Check Questions*

- Was the analysis of the school program done in relation to the accomplishment of the critical learner needs, the schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and the criteria concepts?

- Was the accuracy of the findings discussed and supported by evidence?

- Did discussion occur about how the findings relate to supporting the learning needs of all students?

- Were evaluative responses provided for all the criteria/indicators/prompts with supporting evidence? (How effective? What has been the impact on student learning?)

- Are strengths and prioritized areas for growth reasonable based on the aligned findings and evidence?

Task 5: Revise the comprehensive schoolwide action plan; establish an ongoing follow-up process to monitor implementation and accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan

➔ **Note**: The product is a revised schoolwide action plan based on the results of the self-study. The school integrates the school initiatives into one overall plan.

Product

- Self-Study Report

- Chapter V: "Schoolwide Action Plan"

A. Revise the schoolwide action plan. For each section include the elements listed below:

- Statement of area for improvement that is student-focused

- Rationale for area based on self-study findings

- Link to one or more critical learner needs and schoolwide learner outcomes

- Ways of assessing progress, including student achievement of the critical learner needs, schoolwide learner outcomes, and academic standards

- Means to monitor and report progress

- Who is responsible and involved

- Specific steps, including professional development

- Timeline

- Resources.

B. State any additional specific strategies to be used by staff within each subject area/support program to support sections of the schoolwide action plan.

This includes activities in subject areas related to strengthening a standards-based approach in support of student achievement based on both academic standards and the schoolwide learning results (optional).

C. Describe the school's overall follow-up process for ongoing improvement process.

> ➔ **Note**: **the SC submits the self-study report after final Leadership Team review.**
> **The SC distributes the report electronically to the following people/organizations no later than six weeks prior to the visit:**
> - **The visiting committee members**
> - **Staff members and other stakeholders.**
> - **In addition:**
>   - **The SC submits the self-study report to ACS WASC in a single pdf or Word document (reference and support materials are not required) using the Document Upload link on the top navigation bar of the ACS WASC website: www.acswasc.org/document-upload/.**

Participants

Leadership Team
All Stakeholders via Home and Focus Groups.

Procedures

1. Review the Focus Group summaries.
2. Generate a table or matrix of all the strengths from each of the four categories and a second table for the prioritized growth areas from the four categories.
3. Use this list of strengths and prioritized growth areas from all five categories and cluster them into major themes or strands, including the relating of these to the critical learner needs.
4. Review the current schoolwide action plan and decide upon appropriate modifications based on the resulting themes emerging from the self-study.
5. Synthesize or incorporate the identified growth areas into meaningful action plan sections.
6. Review the current schoolwide action plan and decide upon appropriate modifications.
6. Ensure that the goals or areas for improvement are student-focused.
7. Ensure that growth targets have been established for each priority critical learner need and related schoolwide learner outcome(s). These growth targets should address subgroups of students as appropriate.
8. Gather feedback, gain consensus, and ensure commitment of all groups.
9. Make any additional modifications. Revise the plan. Obtain all required approvals.
10. Establish process to monitor student learning based on the critical learner needs, the schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and progress on each schoolwide action plan section (i.e., annual progress report to all stakeholders, the board, and advisory groups).
11. Provide an annual progress report to all stakeholders, school site council and/or advisory groups, and the board. See "The Follow-up: Making Headway" section of this manual.

✔️ *Self-Check Questions*

- Is the action plan organized around growth targets and benchmarks for all appropriate student subgroups?

- Do the action plan sections address the learning needs of students as identified in the student/community profile?

- Has the school integrated other initiatives to create one single comprehensive schoolwide action plan?

- Are resources dedicated to each growth target?

- Is there an effective process in place to integrate the visiting committee suggestions after the visit?

- Is there a sound follow-up process that will be used to monitor the accomplishment of the action plan and modify as needed?

Formal action plans from each Home Group are not necessary; the critical emphasis is the consensus and commitment from all stakeholders in implementing the various sections of the schoolwide action plan.