

Visiting Committee Chairperson Checklist

Previsit Preparation

- ___ 1. Attend ACS WASC chair training.
- ___ 2. Study the HIDOE/ACS WASC *Focus on Learning* process guide, the reference cards, and the accreditation status worksheet.
- ___ 3. Review the six expectations to be accomplished through the self-study:
 - a. Inclusiveness: The involvement and collaboration of all school/community stakeholders to support student achievement.
 - b. Purposefulness: The clarification of the school’s vision/mission and the General Learner Outcomes.
 - c. Student-focused: The analysis of data about students and student achievement.
 - d. Evaluation: The evaluation of the entire school program and its impact on student learning based on General Learner Outcomes, academic standards, and the HIDOE/ACS WASC criteria.
 - e. Accountability: The implementation and monitoring of the Academic Plan that supports high-quality learning.
 - f. Leadership: The facilitation by school leadership of the HIDOE/ACS WASC accreditation/school improvement process that advocates, nurtures, and sustains the vision and the culture of learning.
- ___ 4. Review the HIDOE/ACS WASC criteria, the criteria indicators, the prompts, the evidence to examine, appropriate academic standards, and educational references.
- ___ 5. Work with the school and maintain regular communication with the principal and self-study coordinator (SC) to answer questions or give assistance.
- ___ 6. Understand the school’s culture, vision, mission, and General Learner Outcomes and review past reports, and Academic Plans. Review the *HIDOE Strategic Plan 2017-2020*. Obtain the current Academic Plan, prior pertinent reports, view website, HIDOE data, etc. (Examples of reports include prior self-study and mid-cycle reports, revisit report, and corresponding visiting committee reports.)
- ___ 7. Discuss the expense reimbursement procedures with ACS WASC staff and convey this information to the Visiting Committee members. See the Chair Memo attached to the Chair Acceptance Letter for visit and reimbursement details.
- ___ 8. Communicate with the school about the following issues:

➔ **Note:** Begin critiquing draft sections of the self-study, e.g., the profile and the summary, General Learner Outcomes, identified student learning needs, and progress report, one or more Focus Group summaries, and draft of the updated Academic Plan. Ensure that the student learning needs are addressed throughout the analysis of the school’s program based on the criteria areas and found in the Academic Plan. Provide timely feedback.

- a. The calendar/timeline for the self-study process
 - Has the timeline been developed so that the self-study will be ready to send to the visiting committee no later than six weeks prior to the visit?
 - How has maximum time for Home and Focus Group meetings been allotted? Are the meetings well-spaced out throughout the self-study process?
- b. Committee organization and membership
 - ➔ **Note:** As long as the school adheres to the expectations, there is flexibility in the self-study process. If the school modifies the suggested self-study process, it should explain how the *outcomes* have been met.
 - How is the Leadership Team taking an active role in facilitating the entire self-study process?
 - How is there active involvement of all certificated staff members, including administration, and strong representation of other stakeholder groups?
 - Are all certificated staff serving on two groups — a Home Group and a Focus Group?
 - Has the school reflected upon the type of committee organization that will be most effective in the implementation of the Academic Plan? For example, has the school considered maintaining the Focus Groups after the visit to oversee the Academic Plan?
- c. Refinement and use of the student/community profile data
 - 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?
 - How has the Leadership Team facilitated the discussion of the profile by all certificated staff members and other stakeholders?
 - How are the stakeholders using the profile to guide the inquiry into the school programs, especially the identified student learning needs and the related important questions noted in the profile summary?
- d. Understanding the vision, mission, and General Learner Outcomes
 - Has the Leadership Team involved the stakeholders in a review of the current vision, mission, and General Learner Outcomes in relation to the current learner needs and future challenges for the students in order to be globally competent?
 - To what extent is there commitment to accomplishing the General Learner Outcomes from all certificated staff, all students, and other stakeholder groups?
 - To what extent has the school developed measurable indicators of the General Learner Outcomes and defined their quality accomplishment?
 - Do the stakeholders understand how to use the profile data, including the vision, mission, the student learning needs, and General Learner Outcomes, to guide further inquiry about student achievement and the school programs?
 - Is there understanding of the complementary relationship of General Learner Outcomes to academic standards?

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- e. Progress since the previous full self-study
 - Did the school show how all schoolwide critical areas of follow-up identified by visiting committees since the last full self-study were integrated into the Academic Plan?
 - Did the school address each section of the Academic Plan?
 - Did the progress report include data and information that indicate whether school staff and students met established growth targets?
 - Does the report show how each section impacted student accomplishment of the student learning needs and one or more General Learner Outcomes?
 - Did the school show how other critical areas for follow-up were addressed that were not part of the Academic Plan?
 - f. Analysis and synthesis of the quality of the school program in relation to the General Learner Outcomes, academic standards, and the HIDEOE/ACS WASC criteria
 - How are the Home and Schoolwide Focus Groups analyzing the school program in relation to the concepts of the criteria and the accomplishment of the General Learner Outcomes?
 - What strategies are being used by the groups to ensure accuracy of the findings discussed?
 - To what extent is discussion occurring about how the findings relate to supporting the learning needs of all students?
 - g. Development of the Academic Plan and monitoring process
 - Is the Academic Plan organized around growth targets and benchmarks for all appropriate student subgroups?
 - Do the Academic Plan goals address the learning needs of all students as identified in the student/community profile?
 - Has the school integrated other initiatives to create one single comprehensive Academic Plan?
 - Are resources dedicated to each growth target?
 - Is there an effective process in place to integrate the visiting committee suggestions into the Academic Plan after the visit?
 - Is there a sound follow-up process that will be used to monitor the accomplishment of the Academic Plan and modify as needed?
 - Is the Academic Plan organized around growth targets and benchmarks for all appropriate student subgroups?
 - Do the Academic Plan sections address the learning needs of all students as identified in the student/community profile?
 - Are resources dedicated to each growth target?
 - Is there an effective process in place to integrate the visiting committee suggestions into the Academic Plan after the visit?
 - Is there a sound follow-up process that will be used to monitor the accomplishment of the Academic Plan and modify as needed?

- h. Exhibit of representative evidence for the visiting committee
 - How will exhibit materials that reflect the evidence analyzed in the self-study be organized for the visiting committee, i.e., in classrooms and the visiting committee workroom, electronically?
 - Will the evidence reflect:
 - A linkage to General Learner Outcomes, academic standards, and HIDOE/ACS WASC criteria
 - A linkage to identified student learning needs, “identified growth areas,” and Academic Plan goals
 - All students.
 - Will the visiting committee be provided a general list of available evidence?
 - What evidence will be available prior to the visit?
- i. The visit schedule
 - How can the schedule maximize time for dialogue with the Focus Groups, the gathering and review of evidence (class and program observations, interviews, examination of student work), and meetings with subject area/support/other groups and individuals? (Focus Groups meet for 1 ½ to 2 hours and include two members of the visiting committee after observation of the school program.)
 - Does the schedule for the visit permit daily dialogue with the Leadership Team and principal/head of school regarding preliminary findings, thereby building trust and rapport for ongoing communication and collaboration?
 - What would be effective strategies to use during the Leadership Team, Focus Group, and other meetings?
- j. Visiting committee work space at the school site
- k. Meeting room at school for visiting committee meetings (school to provide LCD projector and other technological equipment, as needed)
- l. Computer access and compatibility with the system that the chair will be using for draft report
- m. Housing and visit arrangements.

- ___ 9. Receive roster of visiting committee members; begin communication, i.e., phone calls, emails, or faxes.
- a. Send the initial letter, including the school description, to the members electronically; ACS WASC will send the HIDOE/ACS WASC *Focus on Learning* manual and reference cards directly to the visiting committee members; confirm the members’ desired email address, phone number, and mailing address for mailing of the completed self-study
 - b. Ask members for their preferred areas of expertise and coverage during the visit
 - c. Remind members that they are **expected** to participate in visiting committee training through site-based workshops or webinars.

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- ___ 10. Continue to maintain contact with the school to determine:
- If the school needs further direct assistance
 - Progress on the report
 - Progress on housing and other physical arrangements
- ➔ **Note:** Continue the critique of each section of the report, i.e., table of contents, student/community profile, General Learner Outcomes, progress report, the draft Focus Group summaries, and the Academic Plan.
- Appropriate technical and clerical support.
- ___ 11. Send the second letter to visiting committee members electronically:
- Provide writing assignments
 - Ask the members to review the criteria as the entire self-study report is analyzed
 - Ask for the comparison of the school's self-study findings to the concepts of the criteria, the student learning needs, and the mission, vision, and General Learner Outcomes
 - Prior to the visit, require* the completion of the previsit preparation worksheets (Suggestion: use the Google Drive template)
 - Use the comments and questions to complete the drafts of Chapters I, II, III, and V
 - Prior to the visit, require* written tentative narrative statements for assigned sections of the visiting committee report; ensure all work on the criteria sections include analytical comments about all related indicators; assign two people to write to each criteria category
- ➔ **Note:** The questions and tentative narrative statements should be sent to the visiting committee chair prior to the visit. The chair will create a tentative report that will be used at the initial team meeting. Many chairs will use shared documents using Google Drive.
- Assign members to write preliminary statements for specified accreditation factors prior to the determination of the accreditation status ratings to ensure correlation with the findings in the visiting committee report
 - Provide the schedule for the visit.
- ___ 12. Maintain regular contact with school to check the following:
- Progress of the self-study report
 - Date the school completes and sends the self-study report
 - Preparation of reference/evidence materials for visit
 - Receipt of list of reference/evidence
 - Availability and knowledge of clerical and technical support.
- ___ 13. Make final contact with visiting committee members:
- Confirm receipt of the self-study
 - Offer assistance with the understanding of assigned tasks and prewriting

- c. Remind members to send questions and tentative writing
 - d. Offer additional assistance to special visiting committee members
 - e. Confirm the initial meeting time
 - f. Remind members to take cash/credit card for expenses that will be reimbursed after visit and to keep receipts of any such expenditures.
- ___ 14. Prepare the first draft of the visiting committee report correlated to the self-study report chapters. Ahead of time begin writing the following: Preface, brief comments on the self-study outcomes; Chapter I, response to the school’s progress report; Chapter II, summary of key information from the student/community profile; and Chapter V, ongoing school improvement based on the Academic Plan; include all thoughts from the visiting committee members for these sections and their drafts for Chapter III, the school program based on the HIDOE/ACS WASC criteria and indicators; have the tentative report ready for the initial orientation visiting committee meeting (i.e., Monday afternoon). **Note:** Using Google Drive will facilitate all members being aware of the draft visiting committee report.
- ___ 15. Plan the orientation meeting for visiting committee members prior to initial meeting at school (e.g., Monday afternoon). The meeting should cover:
- a. The purpose of visit
 - b. Conducting the visit in an atmosphere of collaborative and open communication
 - c. Emphasis upon HIDOE/ACS WASC criteria, the school’s student learning needs and the General Learner Outcomes and academic standards as the basis for the self-study and visit
 - d. Discussion of school direction(s) and where school is with respect to the refinement of General Learner Outcomes and academic standards
 - e. Discussion of the self-study report: trends and perceptions based on the General Learner Outcomes, academic standards, and HIDOE/ACS WASC criteria (questions, concerns, and tentative written comments); type of verification needed
 - f. Discussion of ways to gather and review evidence with emphasis upon important areas to observe, ask about, or examine based on the self-study perceptions
 - g. Review of the initial meeting with the school staff and the overall schedule, including important strategies to use during the meetings
 - h. Modeling the collaborative Leadership Team meeting to ensure consensus of all visiting committee members
 - i. Review of the accreditation status determination and the summary for the Commission
 - j. Reminder to the members to keep expenses to a minimum.

**The Visit: How Do We Know Students Are Learning?
What is the Actual Program for Students?**

- ___ 1. Conduct the orientation meeting for the visiting committee members.
➔ **Note:** See the suggested agenda above.
- ___ 2. Conduct an initial meeting with the school’s Leadership Team that includes a reflective discussion on the general perceptions gleaned from the self-study report (planned jointly with the principal and SC prior to visit).
- ___ 3. Facilitate the visit; keep in mind the following:
 - a. Maintain a positive atmosphere
 - b. Keep to the task
 - c. Maintain open communication and collaboration at all times
 - d. Ensure that all visiting committee members are active participants in the school committee meetings
 - e. Ensure that the gathering and review of evidence occurs throughout the school; this includes class/program observations, interviews, examination of student work and other data, subject area/support group meetings
 - f. Ensure that no area is overlooked
 - g. Assist the visiting committee members
 - h. Ensure consensus on the critical questions for all groups based on overall visiting committee findings
 - i. Avoid issues related to school policies or negotiations
 - j. Stress with the visiting committee to avoid prescription and “how we do it at our school” discussion
 - k. Lead all visiting committee discussions on the findings, relating them to the accomplishment of the General Learner Outcomes and the HIDOE/ACS WASC criteria
 - l. Coordinate the preparation of the visiting committee report.
- ___ 4. At all visiting committee meetings during the three and one-half days, facilitate the dialogue about the school’s program and its impact on student learning in relation to the General Learner Outcomes, academic standards, and the HIDOE/ACS WASC criteria.
- ___ 5. Regularly communicate with the school leaders, including the Leadership Team, about the visiting committee findings and their implications for refinement of the Academic Plan.
- ___ 6. At the final meeting with the Leadership Team, facilitate a thorough dialogue about the Academic Plan based upon the school and visiting committee findings in relation to the General Learner Outcomes, academic standards, and the HIDOE/ACS WASC criteria.
 - a. Ensure the Leadership Team has an opportunity to ask questions and clarify areas of the report
 - b. Ensure that the critical areas for follow-up include a “who,” “what,” and “why” in terms of impact on student learning. Distinguish the different types of critical areas

- for follow-up with an introductory stem: e.g., the visiting committee concurs with the areas already identified by the school
- c. Point out that after the visit the Leadership Team needs to integrate the visiting committee's key issues and critical areas for follow-up into the Academic Plan
 - d. Work with visiting committee members to discuss and investigate any issues or questions raised in the dialogue with the Leadership Team.
- ___ 7. Facilitate necessary visiting committee report modifications as the visiting committee report is finalized.
 - ___ 8. Have visiting committee members individually complete the accreditation status worksheets based on the findings noted in the visiting committee report. Have them review each HIDOE/ACS WASC criterion and supporting indicators within the five categories. Have them individually make decisions regarding the quality of the school's educational program with respect to these and the other accreditation factors.
 - ___ 9. Facilitate the visiting committee discussion of the accreditation status worksheet ratings and come to consensus regarding the ratings. Have the members complete the "Documentation and Justification Statement" that includes the ratings and aligned comments that reflect the visiting committee report.
 - ___ 10. Facilitate the discussion of the accreditation status recommendation and complete the final page of the "Documentation and Justification Statement" with compelling evidence that supports the visiting committee's recommendation. Complete this final page or rationale for the recommended status.
 - ___ 11. Coordinate the completion of the "Accreditation Status Recommendation" and the "Documentation and Justification Statement" for the Commission.
Ensure:
 - a. Alignment between the visiting committee report and the recommended accreditation status
 - b. Member signatures are on the status recommendation sheet
 - c. Brief description of the discussion and status options considered by the visiting committee
 - d. A clearly stated rationale based upon factors impacting the accreditation status.
 - ___ 12. Edit the final visiting committee report with the assistance of the visiting committee members. Ensure that all key topics of chapters are addressed.
 - ___ 13. Facilitate the presentation of the visiting committee findings to the entire staff at the close of the visit. Use the PowerPoint presentation regarding the overall findings. Do not imply the recommended accreditation status. Leave a draft copy of the visiting committee report with the principal.
 - ___ 14. Continually stress the importance of immediate follow-up to integrate the visiting committee narrative suggestions and critical areas for follow-up into the school's Academic Plan for yearly implementation and assessment.
 - ___ 15. Have the visiting committee complete the evaluation of chairperson form (optional).

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- ___ 16. Review the visiting committee expense forms and submit them to school for reimbursement. Be sure to keep copies of the forms and receipts for your records.

After the Visit

- ___ 1. Finalize the necessary ACS WASC forms: the “Accreditation Status Recommendation” and the “Documentation and Justification Statement” for the Commission.
- ___ 2. Complete the final editing on the visiting committee report within ten (10) working days. Ensure that the school receives a final copy of the visiting committee report.
- ___ 3. Submit copies of the: (1) Accreditation Status Recommendation, (2) Documentation and Justification Statement, and (3) Visiting Committee Report electronically to the ACS WASC office using the **Document Upload** link on the top navigation bar of the ACS WASC website: www.acswasc.org/document-upload/.
- ___ 4. Keep copies of all ACS WASC forms and visiting committee report.
- ___ 5. Guide members in completing the evaluation forms for the chair.
- ___ 6. Send the appropriate letters of appreciation.
- ___ 7. Follow up on any outstanding reimbursement payment yet to be received. Contact the ACS WASC Business Office if there are questions about a reimbursement.
- ___ 8. Communicate to the visiting committee members the decision of the Commission on the final accreditation status awarded to the school. This decision is reached either at the January, April, or June ACS WASC Commission meeting. (A copy of the official letter will be sent to the chair.)