Background of ACS WASC accreditation

What is accreditation?

Why accreditation is so important?

ACS WASC guiding accreditation principles

Focus on Learning (FOL) Accreditation’s Cycle of Quality

✓ Self-Study
✓ Visit
✓ Follow-up or Ongoing Improvement

Getting Started: The Initial Visit Process

Focus on Learning: a powerful process for school change
Serving almost 5,200 schools worldwide

33 Commissioners

20 Partner Associations
What does ACCREDITATION mean?

• Self-Renewal and Reflection
• Self-Evaluation of Programs: Effective Structures and Habits/Impact on Students
• Student-Focused
• Schoolwide Collaborative Work

• Inspection
• Report
• Teacher-Focused
• Individual/Small Group work only
How well are students learning and achieving?
Accreditation: A Value-Added Evaluation

Schools add value by...

• Increasing what students know
• Increasing what students can do
• Improving how students feel
  ✓ about themselves
  ✓ about others
  ✓ about learning
Accreditation: An ongoing journey focused on students and their continuous school improvement
Why Accreditation?

- Assures a school community school is *trustworthy* for student learning in a global society
- Validates integrity of school’s program and transcripts worldwide for university acceptance
- Fosters ongoing improvement to support learning
- Provides valuable insight from educators visiting the school
- Benefits schools choosing collaborative processes, e.g., ACS WASC/CDE
I taught Spot how to whistle

I don’t hear him whistling

I said I taught him. I didn’t say he learned it
Focus on Learning

Follow-up

Implement

Assess

Self-Study

Plan

Visit

Accreditation Cycle of Quality
**ACS WASC Guiding Principles** empowers schools to:

* Ensure a culture of total involvement and collaboration of all stakeholders

* Ensure a culture that supports the well-being of all students

* Demonstrate through program evidence that vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes are accomplished by students

* Evaluate achievement of **all** students on academic standards/schoolwide learner outcomes

* Use multiple ways to analyze data

* Evaluate program effectiveness

* Align current prioritized findings to a schoolwide action plan focusing on student achievement

* Implement and monitor continuous improvement and impact on student learning
ACS WASC Guiding Principles

The guiding principles enable a school to demonstrate:

• Total involvement and collaboration of all stakeholders.

• A culture that nurtures and supports the well-being of all students.
Understanding the School’s Culture
ACS WASC Guiding Principles

The guiding principles enable a school to demonstrate:

• Accomplishment of its vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes.
What does ACS WASC mean by Schoolwide Learner Outcomes?

What are the schoolwide learner outcomes at the school?
Are the Schoolwide Learner Outcomes meeting the criteria listed below?

Global
Interdisciplinary
All students
Assessable
Sample Schoolwide Learner Outcome

Students will be:

**INNOVATIVE THINKERS** who

- Build on the ideas, explanations, and reasons of others
- Summarize, analyze, interpret, and evaluate information
- Define problem and use problem-solving strategies appropriate to the context
- Create original work
- Use technology to create products of high quality.
ACS WASC Guiding Principles

The guiding principles enable a school to demonstrate:

• High achievement of all students in relation to district goals (if applicable), schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards.
ACS WASC Guiding Principles

The guiding principles enable a school to demonstrate:

• Use of multiple ways to analyze data to demonstrate student achievement
ACS WASC Guiding Principles

The guiding principles enable a school to demonstrate:

• Evaluation of program effectiveness.
ACS WASC Criteria Categories

Focus on Learning

Organization for Student Learning

What Students Learn

How Students Learn

How Assessment Is Used

School Culture and Environment

Student Personal and Academic Support
Summary: Self-Study Process

**What?** What is the ideal based upon...?

Vision, Mission, Schoolwide Learner Outcomes; ACS WASC criteria and indicators; academic standards

**So What?**

What currently exists?
How effective is it?

**Now What?**

What and how will we modify?
What should be in the Schoolwide Action Plan?
ACS WASC Guiding Principles

The guiding principles enable a school to demonstrate:

- Alignment of findings to a *schoolwide action plan, i.e., (SPSA)* that is aligned with the *District LCAP*. 
Road to the Action Plan

- Schoolwide Learner Outcomes
- Data
- Critical Learner Needs
- Criteria Strengths
- Criteria Growth Areas

Action Plan
ACS WASC Guiding Principles

The guiding principles enable a school to demonstrate:

• Ongoing improvement/accountability and the impact on student learning
HOW
DO
WE
START
A one- or two-day visit by a two-member team to understand the school...

- Its vision, mission, schoolwide learner outcomes
- Its program and operations based upon the ACS WASC criteria.
Affiliation Categories

Candidacy

Initial Accreditation

Denial
A school ...

- Is progressing toward, but does not assume accreditation
- Is not yet ready for the full evaluation based on the ACS WASC criteria
- Provides evidence that sound planning exists with resources to implement these plans within a reasonable time
- Submits an annual progress report to ACS WASC on recommendations integrated into an action plan left by initial visiting team
- Completes a self-study and undertakes a full accreditation visit by the third year of candidacy
A school...

- Meets the organization and support criteria for full accreditation
- Has a history and support system that indicates that a high quality program can be sustained into the foreseeable future
- Completes a self-study and undertakes a full accreditation visit by the third year of initial accreditation
Affiliation Categories: Denial

A school does not fully meet ACS WASC criteria for affiliation

Note: A school may wish to re-apply after deficiencies have been remedied.
Initial Visit Procedures: Online Materials

- Online Materials (www.acswasc.org)
  - Steps for ACS WASC Affiliation
  - Affiliation Form
  - Conditions of Eligibility
  - Initial Visit Procedures Manual

- Materials sent from ACS WASC office
  - School Description
Initial Visit Procedures

- Submit affiliation form
- Pay $160 non-refundable fee
- Staff will review and send detailed school description; additional information is available on the website
Initial Visit Procedures

- Complete and submit initial visit application/school description by deadline
- Work with appointed visiting committee chair on date
- Pay invoice for initial visit
- Work with assigned visiting committee chair on schedule of day
- Prepare documentation for review by visiting committee prior to and during visit
Initial Visit School Description

- Part I: Identifying Data
- Part II: School (Student/Community) Profile
  - Introductory Paragraph(s)
  - School Description
  - Student Demographic Data
  - Analyzed and Interpreted Student Achievement Data
  - Student Follow-up
Types of Data

Examples:

- Ethnicity or Nationality
- English proficiency
- Gender/age mix
- Special Populations
- Mobility of students
Types of Data

Examples:

- Achievement
  - College SAT, Advanced Placement
  - CAASPP
- California School Dashboard
- Post Graduation Data (University Entrance)
Part III: The Criteria

Use Rubrics (See the Initial Visit Procedures Manual)

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### Category A: Organization for Student Learning

#### A1. School Purpose Criterion

The school has established a clear vision and mission (purpose) that reflects the beliefs and philosophy of the institution. The purpose is defined further by adopted schoolwide learner outcomes that form the basis of the educational program for every student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIAL</th>
<th>CANDIDATE</th>
<th>EXAMPLES OF DOCUMENTATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The school has established a clear statement of vision and mission (purpose) that reflects the beliefs and philosophy of the institution.</td>
<td>- The school has adopted a clear statement of purpose.</td>
<td>- Statement of school purpose. (Note: school purpose is a general term for terminology used by schools such as vision, mission, or philosophy and objectives).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The school has adopted a system and process to communicate the school's purpose that will lead to further development of schoolwide learner outcomes.</td>
<td>- The student/learning data has impacted the development of the school purpose.</td>
<td>- Schoolwide student goals (schoolwide learner outcomes) and the process for development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders understand and are committed to the purpose of the school.</td>
<td>- There is a clear and systematic network of communication of the school's purpose and schoolwide learner outcomes within the school community.</td>
<td>- Student/learning goal documentation and performance information and data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There is a process in place for the regular review or revision of the school purpose and schoolwide learner outcomes.</td>
<td>- The school has designed a system and process to communicate the school’s purpose that will lead to further development of schoolwide learner outcomes.</td>
<td>- Admission policies and materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There is consistency between the school purpose, the schoolwide learner outcomes, the school program, and ongoing improvement.</td>
<td>- Plans to carry out the school purpose are in place and implementation has begun that show alignment of the schoolwide learner outcomes, the program, and ongoing improvement.</td>
<td>- Master schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Publications and other media are used to inform parents and community members about the school purpose.</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Any academic or operational plan the school may have in place.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Part III: The Criteria, School Purpose, and Schoolwide Learner Outcomes — in addition, use iNACOL standards listed for online components

- Respond to questions for each criterion
- Provide documentation
- Achievements
- Areas for Improvement
A. Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources

B. Standards-based Student Learning: Curriculum

C. Standards-based Student Learning: Instruction

D. Standards-based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability

E. School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth
ACS WASC Criteria Categories

A. Organization for Student Learning
B. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
C. Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth
D. Resource Management and Development
ACS WASC International Criteria Categories

A. Organization for Student Learning
B. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
C. Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth
D. School Culture and Environment
Part IV: School Description

- Major Achievements/Accomplishments of students, staff, and school
- Major School Needs, focusing on student achievement
The Initial Visit: Learning about School

Are students learning?
Are systems and operations supporting learning?
“Every student will be an effective communicator”

Each student may demonstrate this by:

• Writing English clearly and proficiently
• Receiving information and constructing meaning through reading and listening skills
• Using nonverbal techniques to communicate accurately with others
• Using verbal language to communicate clearly when giving presentations to groups or talking with other individuals
• Exchanging information when working in a cooperative group.
The Initial Visit

The schedule includes:

• Dialogue with all stakeholders
• Observation of students involved in the program
• Review of further documentation (view as much as possible prior to visit)
• Initial visiting committee report with recommendations
Documents

For example...

- Student work
- Handbooks
- Curriculum documents
- Recruiting brochures
Initial Visiting Committee Report

• Introduction (brief summary from Part I and II — can use excerpts from the School Description)
• Categories A–D or E and other areas
  – Selected statements from the school application (optional)
  – Visiting committee comments
• Schoolwide Areas of Strength
• Critical Areas for Follow-up
Part II: ACS WASC Justification and Recommendation

• Status Recommendation (rating based on rubrics)
  ✓ Meets standard for initial accreditation
  ✓ Meets standard for candidacy
  ✓ Does not meet standard

• Justification Statement for Status
  A brief narrative — rationale for recommendation
Alignment of Findings to ACS WASC Criteria
Initial Visit Results

ACS WASC Commission action

School addresses initial visit recommendations

School begins and completes self-study/full visit within 2–3 years of candidacy or initial accreditation
Follow-up from Initial Visit

- Implementation of recommendations that have been integrated into the schoolwide action plan
- Update of Student/Community Profile
- Refinement of schoolwide learner outcomes
Follow-up from Initial Visit

• Preparation of annual progress report on school’s action plan, including the progress on the critical areas for follow-up left within the initial visiting committee report (candidate schools submit by June 1\(^{st}\) of the following year)

• Pre-planning and preparation for first self-study
  – ACS WASC Self-Study Training: 18 months from scheduled visit (e.g., October/November 2021 and April 2022 for a 2022-2023 visit)
Focus on Learning

For 30 years, the ACS WASC FOL process has asked schools two questions:

1. How do you know that all students are learning and achieving...
   - schoolwide learner outcomes
   - essential core knowledge and skills?

2. Are you doing everything possible to support students in their learning?
Self-Study = Putting Together A Puzzle
Summary: Focus on Learning Self-Study Process

**What?**

*What is the ideal based upon...?*

- **Vision, Mission, Schoolwide Learner Outcomes**
- **ACS WASC criteria and indicators**
- **Curricular standards**

**So What?**

*What currently exists? How effective is it?*

**Now What?**

*What and how will we modify? What should be in the schoolwide action plan?*
Self-Study Committees

- Leadership Team
  - Plans & guides

Focus Groups
- Criteria & student work

Stakeholder Groups
- Student work & criteria
ACS WASC Criteria Categories

- Organization for Student Learning
- Resource Management and Allocation
- Support for Student/Personal and Academic Growth
- Focus on Student Learning
- How Students Learn
- How Student Assessment is Used

© ACS WASC 60
Sample ACS WASC Criterion: Instruction—How Students Learn

**Criterion:**
To what extent does the professional staff...

- a) use research-based knowledge about teaching and learning; and b) design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students at a high level of learning consistent with the school’s purpose and schoolwide learner outcomes?

**Sample Indicator**

*Evidence of Results based upon Challenging Learning Experiences*

- Students working and their work demonstrate critical, creative thinking, problem solving, knowledge attainment, and application skills.
Focus Groups use ACS WASC Criteria and Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are the criteria concepts?</th>
<th>What evidence is needed for analysis?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Gathering and Analyzing Data/Information</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Types of Data/Evidence for Self-Study

- Demographic
- Outcome
- Process/Perception
Observable Evidence Requires Analyzing Results of

- What students are doing/producing
- Student interviews/observations
- Hard data and information
- Other observations and interviews
What are we learning from all the data?
Self-Study Process: The “So What” Question? What currently exists? How effective?
Self-Study Process and Product

**Process**
- Home Groups
- Leadership Team
- Focus Groups

**Product**
- Analytical response to criteria
- Evidence
- Strengths
- Key areas for follow-up

Professional knowledge
Data
Observations
Surveys/interviews
Student work
Documents
Self-Study: Schoolwide Action Plan
Important School Questions about the Plan

Through implementing the plan, what will be different for students as global citizens?

— One year from now?
— Two years from now?
— Three years from now?
ACS WASC Accreditation Cycle

Focus on Learning

Assess

Self-Study

Plan

Visit

Implement

Follow-up

Reassess
Where is the school now? Where’s it going? Does it have a good roadmap?
The Visit by Fellow Educators: Purpose

Based on ACS WASC criteria, school’s purpose and schoolwide learner outcomes and self-study, the visiting committee (VC)*...

- Provides insight about student learning and school program
  - Validates school program
  - Celebrates school strengths
  - Provides recommendations on growth areas

* Visiting Committee chair/members: team size based on school size, spends a week at school
The Visit by Fellow Educators: Purpose

- Prepares a written report for the school and the Commission
- Recommends an accreditation status
- Commission takes action on status:
  - ✔ Six years: (mid-cycle report and possibly a one- or two-day visit)
  - ✔ Probation: (one or two years)
  - ✔ Denial or Withheld
Accreditation Status Factors: VC Recommendation and Commission Action

To what extent is the school demonstrating quality student achievement/improvement?

1. Meeting the ACS WASC criteria and indicators
2. Clear globally minded purpose and schoolwide learner outcomes
3. Quality processes to analyze student achievement
4. Action plan aligned to areas of greatest need
5. Capacity to implement/monitor action plan
6. Total involvement and collaboration
7. Use of prior accreditation findings
Focus on Learning

Accreditation Cycle of Quality

Follow-up
Reassess
Implement
Assess
Self-Study
Plan
Visit
The Follow-Up: After Visit

The school

• Revises the schoolwide Action Plan
  – Includes recommendations from the visiting committee
  – Submits the Action Plan to ACS WASC
• Annually reviews progress on Action Plan based on Schoolwide Learner Outcomes — Global Competencies
• Revises the Action Plan as needed
• Submits annual progress report to ACS WASC
• Has periodic visit from ACS WASC
ACS WASC 6-Year Accreditation Cycle

Focus on Learning
Focus on Learning: A Powerful Change Process

The Foundation

What do want students to know, understand and be able to do to become Global Citizens?

Schoolwide Learner Outcomes = Global Competencies
We Are Student Centered