

Category A. Organization for Student Learning
WASC Criteria Sample Prompts
Based on Suggested Areas to Examine, pp. 93–116
WASC Focus on Learning, 2003-2004 Edition

Home/Focus Work: What currently exists and how effective is it?

Based on the WASC criteria in this category:

- 1) Review what currently exists.
- 2) Evaluate the current program's effectiveness using these suggested prompts/questions.
- 3) Support responses with analyzed evidence.

(NOTE: Observable evidence includes a) examination of student work, b) observations of students engaged in learning and other aspects of the school program, c) student interviews, d) examination of hard data and information, and e) other observations/ interviews/discussions.)

A. ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING

A1. School Purpose

To what extent does the school a) have a clear statement of purpose that reflects the beliefs and philosophy of the institution and b) define the purpose further by adopted expected schoolwide learning results that form the basis of the educational program for every student?

Beliefs and Philosophy

Comment on the written purpose in relationship to the beliefs and philosophy of the school and its constituency served.

Purpose, ESLRs and Profile Data

Comment on pertinent student/community profile data that has impacted the development of the school purpose and the expected schoolwide learning results.

Involvement of All

Examine the effectiveness of the processes to ensure involvement of representatives from the entire school community in the development/refinement of the purpose and expected schoolwide learning results.

Consistency of Purpose, ESLRs, & Program

Provide a range of examples that the school purpose, ESLRs and program are consistent.

Communication about Purpose & ESLRs

Examine the effectiveness of the means to publicize the purpose and the expected schoolwide learning results to the students, parents and other members of the school community.

Regular Review/Revision

Examine the effectiveness of the process for regular review/revision of the school purpose and the expected schoolwide learning results based on student needs, global, national and local needs, and community conditions.

A1. School Purpose: Other Evidence

What have you learned from analysis of additional evidence regarding this criterion?

A2. Governance *To what extent does the governing authority a) adopt policies which are consistent with the school purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results for the school; b) delegate implementation of these policies to the professional staff, and c) monitor results?*

Clear Policies and Procedures

Comment on the clarity of the policies and procedures regarding the selection, composition and specific duties of the governing authority.

Relationship of Policies

Comment on the degree to which the governing authority policies are directly connected to the school's purpose and vision and expected schoolwide learning results.

Involvement of Governing Authority

How is the governing authority involved in the regular review and refinement of the school's purpose and expected schoolwide learning results?

School Community Understanding

To what degree does the school community understand the governing authority's role?

Relationship to Professional Staff

To what degree is there clear understanding about the relationship between the governing authority and the responsibilities of the professional staff?

Evaluation Procedures

Comment on the clarity of the evaluation procedures carried out by the governing authority.

Evaluation of Governing Authority

Review and assess the process for evaluating the governing authority.

A2. Governance: Other Evidence

What have you learned from examining additional evidence regarding this criterion?

A3. School Leadership

To what extent does the school leadership a) make decisions to facilitate actions that focus the energies of the school on student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results, b) empower the staff, and c) encourage commitment, participation and shared accountability for student learning?

Defined Responsibilities, Practices, etc.

Evaluate the administrator and faculty written policies, charts, and handbooks that define responsibilities, operational practices, decision-making processes, and relationships of leadership and staff. Determine the clarity and understanding of these by administration and faculty.

Existing Structures

How effective are the existing structures for internal communication, planning and resolving differences?

Involvement of Staff

How effective are the processes and procedures for involving staff in shared responsibility, actions, and accountability to support student learning?

Review of Existing Processes

To what extent does the school leadership regularly review the existing processes to determine the degree to which actions of the leadership and staff focus on successful student learning?

A3. School Leadership: Other Evidence

What have you learned from examining additional evidence regarding this criterion?

A4. Staff

To what extent are the school leadership and staff a) qualified for their assigned responsibilities, b) committed to the school's purpose, and engaged in ongoing professional development that promotes student learning?

Employment Policies/Practices

Evaluate the clarity of the employment policies/ practices related to qualification requirements of staff.

Qualifications of Staff

Evaluate the procedures to ensure that staff are qualified based on staff background, training and preparation.

Maximum Use of Staff Expertise

How effective is the process to assign staff members in order to maximize the use of their expertise in accomplishing quality student learning?

Support of Professional Development

How effective is the support of professional development with time, personnel and fiscal resources based upon a written professional development plan?

Supervision and Evaluation

How effective is the school's supervision and evaluation procedures in order to promote professional growth of staff?

Measurable Effect of Professional Development

Comment on the processes and their effectiveness in determining the measurable effect of professional development on student performance.

A4. Staff: Other Evidence

What have you learned from examining additional evidence regarding this criterion?

A5. School Environment

To what extent a) does the school have a safe, healthy, nurturing environment that reflects the school's purpose and b) is the school environment characterized by a respect for differences, trust, caring, professionalism, support and high expectations for each student?

Caring, Concern, High Expectations

To what extent does the school demonstrate caring, concern, and high expectations for students in an environment that honors individual differences and is conducive to learning?

Student Self-Esteem

To what extent does the school foster student self-esteem through high expectations for each student and recognition of successes?

Mutual Respect and Communication

What evidence supports mutual respect and effective communication among and between staff, students, and parents?

Teacher Support and Encouragement

How effective is the level of support and encouragement for teachers to use innovative approaches to enhance student learning?

Policies, Codes, Procedures, Resources

Does the school have policies, codes, procedures and resources (e.g., facilities) that ensure a safe, healthy, nurturing environment that is conducive to learning?

A5. School Environment: Other Evidence

What have you learned from analysis of additional evidence regarding this criterion?

A6. Reporting Student Progress

To what extent does the school leadership regularly a) assess student progress toward accomplishing the school's expected schoolwide learning results and b) report student progress to the rest of the school community?

Student Progress

How is student progress based on schoolwide learning results and curricular objectives determined and monitored?

Existing Standards and Procedures

How effective are the procedures to ensure staff, students, parents, and other school community members understanding about student progress toward the expected schoolwide learning results and the curricular objectives?

A6. Reporting Student Progress: Other Evidence

What you learned from analysis of additional evidence regarding this criterion?

A7. School Improvement Process

To what extent does the school leadership a) facilitate school improvement which is driven by plans of action that will enhance quality learning for all students, b) have school community support and involvement, c) effectively guide the work of the school, and d) provide for accountability through monitoring of the schoolwide action plan?

Broad-based and Collaborative

Document that the school planning process is broad-based, collaborative and has commitment of the shareholders.

School Plan Correlated to Student Learning

What evidence supports that there is a correlation between the schoolwide action plan and analysis of student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results?

Correlation between All Resources, ESLRs, and Plan

What evidence supports the correlation between allocation of time/fiscal/personnel/material resources, expected schoolwide learning results, and the improvement schoolwide action plan?

A7. School Improvement Process: Other Evidence

What you learned from analysis of additional evidence regarding this criterion?