

WASC/WCEA

Visiting Committee Member Handbook

VISITING COMMITTEE MEMBER CHECKLIST

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Previsit Preparation

- _____ 1. Receive first letter from Visiting Committee Chairperson to confirm dates and times of previsit and Visit.
- _____ 2. Participate in mandatory diocesan Visiting Team training session.
- _____ 3. Attend previsit meeting at school site approximately 4-5 weeks prior to actual Visit.
- _____ 4. Become aware of the Key Outcomes of the Self-Study followed by the school:
 - ✦ The involvement and collaboration of school community members in the Self-Study.
 - ✦ The clarification of the school's philosophy, mission, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.
 - ✦ The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning with respect to the criteria.
 - ✦ The development of a School Improvement Action Plan and integrated subject area/support program action steps to address identified growth needs.
 - ✦ The development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the School Improvement Action Plan.
- _____ 5. Review the WASC/WCEA criteria, standards, suggested evidence, and appropriate curricular/educational references.
- _____ 6. Receive additional communications from Chairperson:
 - ✦ Assigning writing tasks.
 - ✦ Requesting the review of the criteria as the entire Self-Study report is analyzed.
 - ✦ Requesting prior to the Visit, the writing of questions to pursue during the Visit and 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.**
 - ✦ Providing a schedule for Visit
- _____ 7. Study the School Report, the Visiting Committee Member Handbook, and the reference cards.
- _____ 8. After receiving the School Report, complete preparation for the Visit:
 - ✦ Review the criteria with respect to the analysis of the School Report; study other pertinent materials.
 - ✦ Determine "matches" and "gaps" with appropriate criteria; critique Action Plan.

- ✦ Write questions regarding issues, concerns, clarifications and evidence that should be pursued during the Visit and develop tentative narratives for assigned sections of Visiting Committee report. **Send these to Visiting Committee Chair according to the schedule established at the previsit.**

_____ 9. Take the following materials to the Visit:

- ✦ *Process for School Improvement* manual (available on site)
- ✦ Reference cards
- ✦ Self-Study Report
- ✦ All notes
- ✦ Visiting Committee Member Handbook

_____ 10. Arrive on time for 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 a genuine interest in the school's welfare and a desire to be helpful. Establish rapport with staff.
- _____ 2. Utilize the concepts of the WASC/WCEA criteria as a comparison base throughout entire Visit.
- _____ 3. Look at the quality of program experienced by students and evidence of successful student learning - the degree to which the Schoolwide Learning Expectations are being accomplished. Evidence of student work should be reflective of the low achieving student, the average achieving student, and the high achieving student.
- _____ 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 observation.
- _____ 6. Structure the gathering of evidence (class/program observations, interviews, examination of student work and other information, dialogue with subject area/support groups) so needed information is gained.
- _____ 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 questions.
- _____ 10. Concentrate on being a good listener. Be aware of nonverbal feedback.

- ____ 11. Meet and lead discussion with school Self-Study committees, which are assigned areas of writing responsibility. Allow adequate time for other Visiting Committee members to explore their concerns and for school staff members to highlight issues important to them. Visiting Committee members help all concerned to recognize the needs of the school and develop a desire to improve the instructional program

Note: Time is limited so don't overemphasize particular concerns. The goal is to clarify information already in the School Report and to secure information not yet provided.
- ____ 12. Don't allow pressure groups or individuals to distract you from the main task and schedule.
- ____ 13. Work cooperatively with all other Visiting Committee members as findings are discussed and decisions made.
- ____ 14. Write quality responses according to the suggested guidelines. Make sure they reflect the important concepts of the criteria in order to serve as guidelines for an effective educational curricular program.
- ____ 15. Provide regular feedback to the Leadership Team and other staff members regarding findings as a result of the Visit, not the Self-Study alone.
- ____ 16. Meet with the Leadership Team to present and *thoroughly discuss the synthesis of the concepts of the criteria, the Self-Study, and the findings* during the Visit, as reflected in the draft Visiting Committee Report.
- ____ 17. Meet with other Visiting Committee members to investigate any issues or questions raised during the Leadership Team meeting.
- ____ 18. Make necessary Visiting Committee Report modifications and bring to closure.
- ____ 19. Individually review each WASC/WCEA criterion within the four categories and overall findings. Individually make decisions regarding the quality of the school's educational program with respect to the four categories of criteria and the other factors impacting the term.
- ____ 20. Participate in the Visiting Committee discussion of the Recommendation for a Term of Accreditation with respect to the WASC/WCEA criteria categories and all findings.
- ____ 21. Assist the Chair in preparing the confidential Documentation and Justification Statement for the Commission ensuring that there is *alignment* among the recommended term, the Documentation and Justification Statement, and the Visiting Committee report.
- ____ 22. Complete Chair evaluation form.
- ____ 23. Participate in the presentation of the findings to the entire staff. Don't imply or discuss the recommended term of accreditation.
- ____ 24. Support and encourage the school in its ongoing follow-up.