



**Accrediting Commission for Schools  
Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

# **Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC Accreditation Process Overview**





# Western Association of Schools and College (WASC)

- A private, nonprofit, regional accrediting association in the United States
- Serves schools in California, Hawaii, Pacific Islands, and worldwide, especially East Asia (Hague, 1961)
- Composed of three commissions
  - Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, e.g., Stanford University
  - Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, e.g., San Francisco Community College
  - Accrediting Commission for Schools, accrediting K-12 schools and non-degree granting postsecondary institutions



# Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC

- **WASC works closely with the U.S. Department of State, Office of Overseas Schools**
- **WASC extends services to over 4,500 pre-K to 12 elementary and secondary public and private schools of various types and non-degree granting postsecondary institutions**
- **Works with 16 other associations in joint processes, such as California and Hawaii state departments of education, WCEA, SDA, and CAIS**
- **The WASC Commission (Board) is composed of 32 members from various organizations**



# Composition of Accrediting Commission for Schools — 32 members

## California

- Association of California School Administrators
- Association of Christian Schools International
- California Association of Independent Schools
- California Association of Private School Organizations
- California Congress of Parents and Teachers
- California Department of Education
- California Federation of Teachers
- California Teachers Association
- California School Boards Association
- Charter Schools
- Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists
- Western Catholic Educational Association

## East Asia

- East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools

## Hawaii

- Hawaii State Department of Education
- Hawaii Government Employees' Association
- Hawaii Association of Independent Schools

## Public Members

- Five public members



# Value of Accreditation

**“Accreditation is an ongoing cycle of school improvement that supports high-quality student learning.”**

- **Accreditation assures a school’s community that the school is trustworthy for students learning in a global society**
- **Accreditation validates the integrity of a school’s program and transcripts for university acceptance**
- **Accreditation fosters ongoing improvement to support learning**
- **Accreditation strengthens teacher understanding and use of quality learning and teaching approaches**
- **Accreditation provides valuable insight from educators visiting the school**
- **Accreditation benefits schools choosing joint WASC affiliate collaborative processes, e.g., WASC/CDE**



# Accreditation Expectations

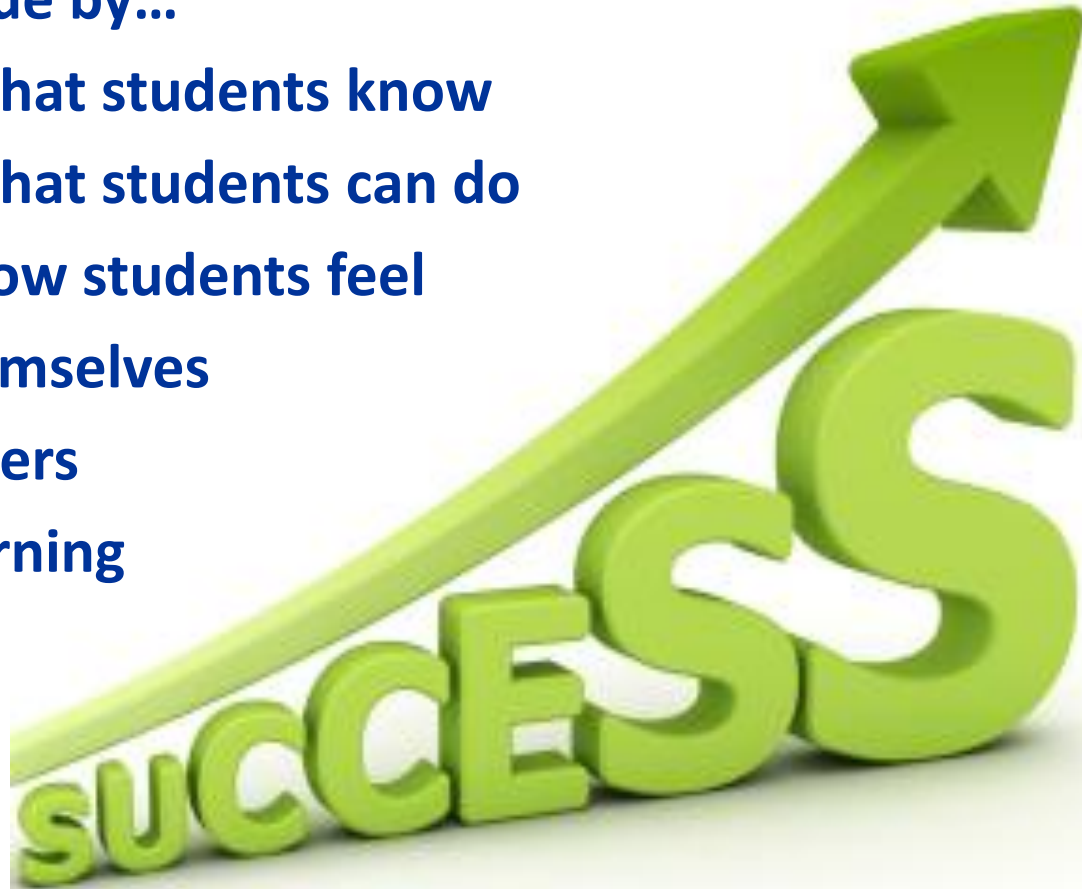
- **Clarification of school purpose and schoolwide student goals**
- **High achievement of all students**
- **Multiple means of data analysis**
- **Program assessment**
- **Alignment of findings and action plan**
- **Integration of program and initiatives**
- **Ongoing improvement/accountability**
- **Total involvement/collaboration**



# 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



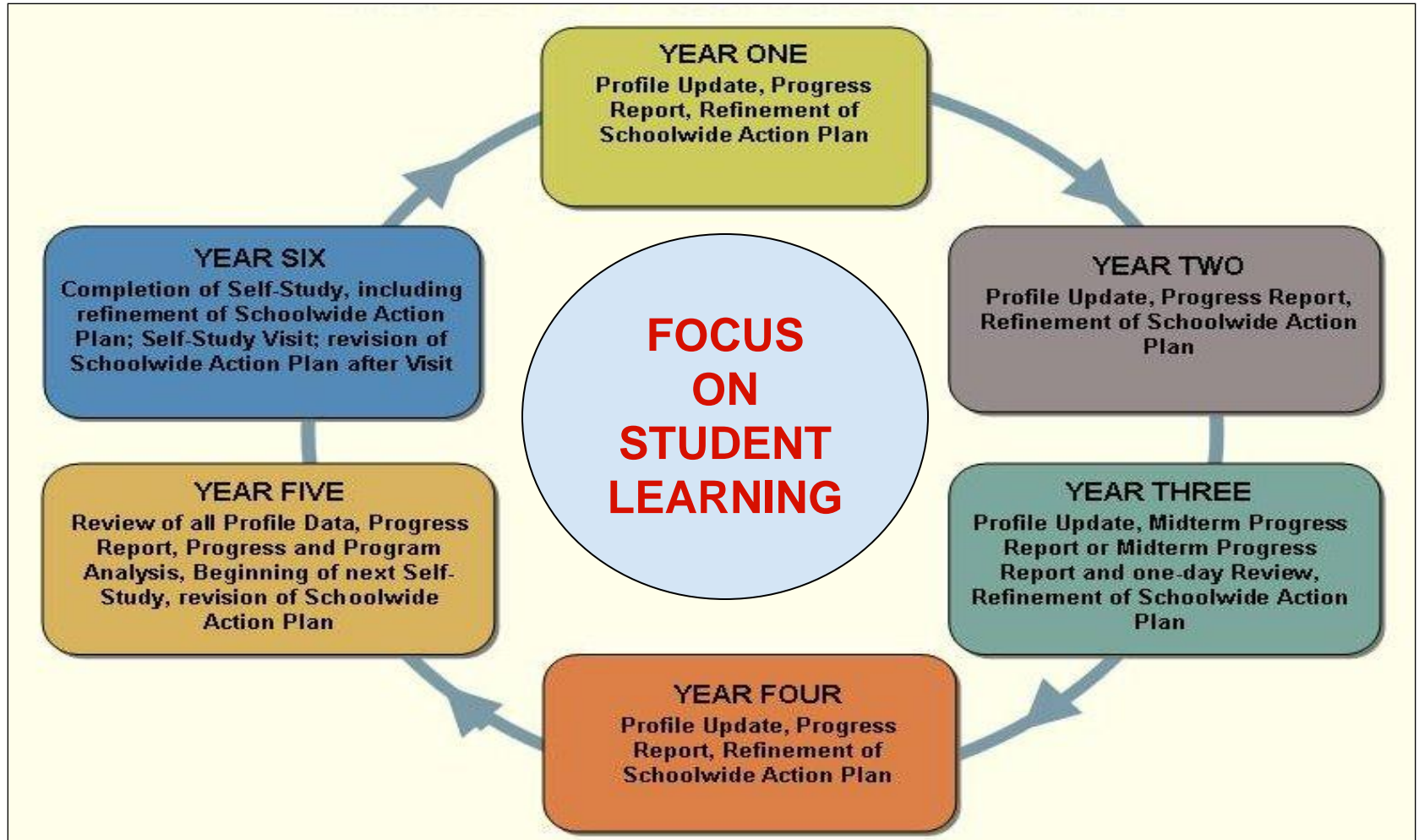


# WASC Focus on Learning Accreditation School Improvement Cycle





# WASC Accreditation Cycle (five or six years)





# One Umbrella Action Plan



- Strategic Plan
- Technology Plan
- Staff Development Plan



# Who are the students? How are the students doing?

- What does the data tell us?



- What questions does the data raise?





# Observable evidence includes analyzing results of...

- What students are doing and producing
- Student interviews and observations
- Hard data and information
- Other interviews, observations, etc.





# Schoolwide Action Plan

**Visualize what will be different for students....**

- **One year from now?**
- **Two years from now?**
- **Three years from now?**





# Schoolwide Action Plan

## Common Action Plan Components:

- ✓ **Goals for improving student achievement**
- ✓ **Growth targets, performance gains expected**
- ✓ **Relationship to schoolwide learner outcomes (Expected Schoolwide Learning Results, or ESLRs)**
- ✓ **Means of evaluating progress**
- ✓ **Who is responsible and involved**
- ✓ **Specific actions to improve educational practice**
- ✓ **Timeline**
- ✓ **Resources**
- ✓ **Annual review, reassessment, and refinement**
- ✓ **Annual Board approval**



# The Visit

- **Insight and perspective of the Visiting Committee**
  - ✓ **Validation**
  - ✓ **Enhancement**
- **Support of the chair**
- **Three to eight educators**
- **Visit is usually 3–½ days, East Asia 4–½ days**
- **The Visiting Committee Report is based on:**
  - ✓ **Self-Study**
  - ✓ **Findings during visit**
  - ✓ **WASC criteria (or joint WASC/affiliate criteria, e.g., WASC/ACSI, WASC/CDE)**



## Term Factors

- **Six-Year Term**: Midterm progress report and a one- or two-day midterm review for some schools
- **Three-Year Term**: Annual progress reports and a two-day visit at the three-year mark
- **One- or Two-Year Term**: Annual progress reports and a one- or two-day visit at the one- or two-year mark
- **Denial of Accreditation**: Reasons detailed in the Visiting Committee Report



# Term Determination

*Terms are determined based on the following:*

- 1. Involvement and collaboration of all stakeholders**
- 2. Defining of the school's purpose through schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards**
- 3. Use of a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, and analyze student performance data**
- 4. Acceptable progress by all students toward clearly defined schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and other institutional and/or governing authority expectations**



## Term Determination (continued)

- 5. Meeting WASC or joint WASC/affiliate criteria**
- 6. Alignment of a long-range schoolwide action plan to the school's areas of greatest need to support high-achievement of all students**
- 7. Capacity to implement and monitor the schoolwide action plan**
- 8. Use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive school improvement**



# School Follow-Up Procedures

- **School refines their action plan after the visit, submitting a revised action plan to the WASC Commission**
- **The school integrates all the recommendations or critical areas for follow-up that were stated in the Visiting Committee report into the revised action plan**
- **Annual assessment by the Leadership Team and entire staff, including data analysis about student learning in relation to the action plan**
- **Completion of progress reports for required revisits; these reports are used to prepare for the next self-study**



# WASC Contact Information

- **Website: [www.acswasc.org](http://www.acswasc.org)**
- **WASC Northern California Office**  
**533 Airport Boulevard, Suite 200**  
**Burlingame, CA 94010**  
**650 696-1060**  
**[mail@acswasc.org](mailto:mail@acswasc.org)**
- **WASC Southern California Office**  
**43517 Ridge Park Drive, Suite 100**  
**Temecula, CA 92590**  
**951 693-2551**  
**[mailsocial@acswasc.org](mailto:mailsocial@acswasc.org)**



**W**

**We**

**A**

**Are**

**S**

**Student**

**C**

**Centered**

