

Accreditation Handbook

**FOR SCHOOLS IN THE
EAST ASIA REGIONAL COUNCIL
OF SCHOOLS**



2011–2012 EDITION

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Preface

The Accrediting Commission for Schools of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) is pleased to be working with schools in the East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS) to provide evaluation and accreditation services. The procedures for appraising international schools have been developed jointly by WASC and EARCOS to meet your needs for self-study and evaluation.

The first EARCOS school to be accredited by WASC was the International School, in Manila, in 1969–1970. Participation has increased rapidly and now there are approximately 220 WASC accredited and applicant schools in the EARCOS region. This extensive involvement of EARCOS schools is the best testimony to the value of the accreditation program. In addition to the quality assurance provided by WASC accreditation, overseas schools are finding that the self-study and the visiting process provides an excellent means to systematically evaluate the total school operation and to involve the entire staff, students, and community in plans for improvement.

The WASC staff looks forward to working with you at one of our upcoming events or individually during the coming year:

- ✓ EARCOS Annual Admin and Teachers' Conferences: Full-day WASC sessions for schools about self-study and serving as a Visiting Committee member — Bangkok, Thailand, November 2011 and March 2012
- ✓ EARCOS Annual Admin Conference: WASC chair training, two-hour Visiting Committee member training, meetings throughout conference with school leaders about accreditation
- ✓ Meetings and trainings continually throughout the East Asia region with individuals and groups of schools
- ✓ Individual phone calls, conference calls, and emails at your convenience

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Introduction

Overview

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), a worldwide-renowned accrediting association and one of the six regional accrediting agencies in the United States, works closely with the Office of Overseas Schools under the U.S. Department of State. This regional association provides assistance to schools located in California, Hawaii, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Fiji, and East Asia. WASC consists of three commissions that accredit different levels of education: (1) four-year universities, e.g., Stanford University; (2) two-year community/junior colleges; and (3) pre-K-12 schools.

The Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC, extends its services to over 4,500 public, independent, church-related, and proprietary pre-K–12 and adult schools, works with 16 different associations in joint accreditation processes, and collaborates with other organizations such as the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). One example is the seamless joint process with the Council of International Schools (CIS). There is one initial visit, self-study, full visit and Visiting Committee Report, and ongoing follow-up process but two accreditation awards independently decided by the agencies.

The Accrediting Commission is composed of 32 representatives from educational organizations that it serves; this includes a representative from the East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS) that supports the work of WASC. The Accrediting Commission has been working with international schools in Asia since the late 1960s and collaborates with foreign ministries of education, e.g., China and Thailand. Three of the first schools to be accredited by WASC in East Asia were the International School of Manila, Ruamrudee International School in Bangkok, and Hong Kong International School. The Commission closely collaborates with EARCOS regarding the accreditation plans for EARCOS schools, including the training and support for international schools.

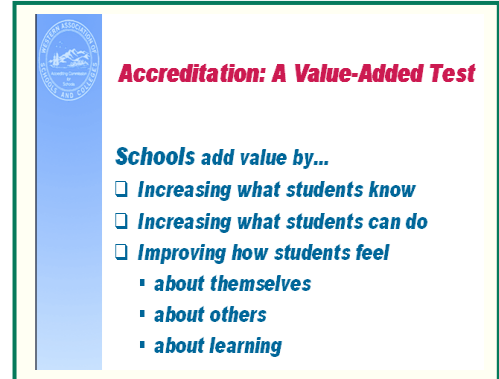
WASC Philosophy

The philosophy of the Accrediting Commission for Schools centers upon three beliefs: (1) a school's goal is successful student learning; (2) each school has a clear purpose and schoolwide student goals; and (3) a school engages in external and internal evaluations as part of continued school improvement to support student learning.

Accreditation is integral to a school's perpetual cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring, and reassessment based upon student achievement. It fosters excellence in elementary, secondary, adult, and postsecondary education by encouraging school improvement through a process of continuing evaluation and to recognize, by accreditation, schools that meet an acceptable level of quality, in accordance with established criteria. In addition to its official title, WASC means *We Are Student-Centered*.

Why Accreditation?

- ✓ Assures a school community that the school's purposes are appropriate and being accomplished through a viable education program — a trustworthy institution for student learning
- ✓ Validates the integrity of the school's program and transcripts
- ✓ Facilitates transfer of credits to other English-speaking schools — critical for college/university acceptance worldwide
- ✓ Fosters the ongoing improvement of the school's programs and operations to support student learning
- ✓ Provides valuable insight from fellow educators visiting the school
- ✓ Benefits schools that choose joint accreditation or other collaborative processes, e.g., WASC/CIS and integration of WASC and IBO



The Nature of the American/International School

The Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges,* recognizes the American/ International School as being one in which:

1. The basic language of instruction is English.
2. The school is accredited, or eligible for accreditation, by one of the regional accrediting associations.
3. The course of study, as well as marking, grading and reporting procedures, facilitates student and faculty transfer to other schools of a similar type in other countries and within the United States.
4. The school administration and governing body are responsive to the needs of their immediate user community meaning students, parent and faculty.
5. The curriculum is similar to that commonly found in the United States and generally meets the minimum requirements for admission to North American and other worldwide English-speaking colleges and universities.
6. The student body is oriented toward programs commonly found in the United States and other English-speaking countries, including those of an extra-curricular or co-curricular nature.
7. Programs of studies include courses dealing with the history, culture and language of the host country, in addition to those that are clearly North American.
8. The school's governing body is not subordinated solely to a national government or a central ministry, but is a local entity responsive to the needs of the users of the school.
9. The stated philosophy of the school indicates a flexibility and responsiveness to the wishes of its users and contains procedures for participation by those users to effect changes in the school's program.

*Adapted from the Association for the Advancement of International Education.

Criteria for Accreditation

A school shall be evaluated on the basis of the degree to which it is accomplishing the purposes and functions outlined in its statement of purpose, and on the appropriateness of those purposes and functions for an institution of its type. In addition, to qualify for accreditation, a school must give evidence of adequately meeting the following criteria which are established as general guidelines to determine the effectiveness of a school's educational program and services.

Fundamental to accreditation is the quality of the educational program experienced by the students. The relative weight of each criterion depends upon its effect on the educational program experienced by students at the school. In addition, a school must give evidence of an ongoing process for improving its educational program.

WASC Schoolwide Criteria

A. ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING

SCHOOL PURPOSE

1. The school has established a clear statement of purpose that reflects the beliefs and philosophy of the institution. The purpose is defined further by adopted expected schoolwide learning results that form the basis of the educational program for every student.

GOVERNANCE

2. The governing authority (a) adopts policies which are consistent with the school purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results for the school, (b) delegates implementation of these policies to the professional staff and (c) monitors results.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

3. The school leadership (a) makes decisions to facilitate actions that focus the energies of the school on student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results (b) empowers the staff and (c) encourages commitment, participation and shared accountability for student learning.

STAFF

4. The school leadership and staff are qualified for their assigned responsibilities, are committed to the school's purpose and engage in ongoing professional development that promotes student learning.

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

5. The school has a safe, healthy, nurturing environment that reflects the school's purpose and is characterized by respect for differences, trust, caring, professionalism, support, and high expectations for each student.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

6. The school leadership and staff regularly assess student progress toward accomplishing the expected schoolwide learning results and report student progress to the rest of the school community.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

7. The school leadership facilitates school improvement which (a) is driven by plans of action that will enhance quality learning for all students, (b) has school community support and involvement, (c) effectively guides the work of the school, and (d) provides for accountability through monitoring of the schoolwide action plan.

B. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

WHAT STUDENTS LEARN

1. The school provides a challenging, coherent and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose and results in student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results through successful completion of any course of study offered.

HOW STUDENTS LEARN

2. The professional staff (a) uses research based knowledge about teaching and learning; and (b) designs and implements a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students at a high level of learning consistent with the school's purpose and expected schoolwide learning results.

HOW ASSESSMENT IS USED

3. Teacher and student uses of assessment are frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process. The assessment results are the basis for (a) measurement of each student's progress toward the expected schoolwide learning results, (b) regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction, and (c) allocation of resources.

C. SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

STUDENT CONNECTEDNESS

1. Students are connected to a system of support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community that meet the challenges of the curricular and co-curricular program in order to achieve the expected schoolwide learning results.

PARENT/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

2. The school leadership employs a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's established support system for students.

D. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

RESOURCES

1. The resources available to the school are sufficient to sustain the school program and are effectively used to carry out the school's purpose and student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results.

RESOURCE PLANNING

2. The governing authority and the school leadership execute responsible resource planning for the future.

E. THE CHINA CONTEXT (FOR NCCT/WASC SCHOOLS ONLY)

1. Local cultures are incorporated into the curriculum in appropriate ways.
2. The governing body and the school management comply with all applicable statutes, government laws, and regulations.
3. The management of the school's finances and property shall be, at all times, in accordance with the standards which operate in China and shall be consistent with best practices in international schools.
4. The governing body and the school management are familiar with Chinese laws and regulations related to the rights and obligations of the employees and comply with those laws and regulations.
5. The school shall actively promote intercultural and international awareness.

EARCOS Accreditation Committee

An EARCOS Accreditation Committee has been established by the East Asia Regional Council of Schools to facilitate communication and contact between WASC and schools in East Asia that are involved or interested in evaluation and accreditation. This committee meets annually at the November EARCOS Conference to review the interim progress reports submitted during the preceding year as a means to monitor the accreditation program and the improvement efforts of the overseas schools. The WASC representatives meet with this committee and use it as a source of information and ideas as to how to improve the accreditation program and procedures as they apply to schools in East Asia. The representative of the Office of Overseas Schools under the U.S. Department of State is a member of this committee as an indication of the endorsement and support of the Office.

WASC/ACSI, WASC/CIS and Other Joint Processes

The Accrediting Commission for Schools is committed to streamlining and integrating ongoing improvement processes. For years schools have integrated strategic planning processes with accreditation. EARCOS schools may choose to be accredited jointly with other organizations or integrate other initiatives. The Accrediting Commission for Schools has streamlined joint processes with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and the Council of International Schools (CIS-formerly part of the European Council of International Schools). The Commission works closely with ACSI and collaborates in all aspects of the process, i.e., the initial visit, the self-study, the visit, and subsequent visits and progress reports. Similarly, the Commission has a seamless process with CIS so that schools may choose a 5/10 year cycle or the 6/12 year cycle and utilize one protocol. In addition, the Commission is collaborating with numerous agencies and associations through the integration of documents, materials, and procedures, including joint training. Examples of this include the cooperation with the organizations through the Four Parties Agreement in China, the project with the Thailand Ministry of Education, and the International Baccalaureate Organization.

Note: EARCOS is represented on the WASC Commission by a designee recommended by the Chair of EARCOS. This representative serves a three-year term.

WASC Accreditation Procedures for Overseas Schools

The international accreditation process can be explained as an ongoing cycle of improvement. Below is a brief explanation of the various aspects of the international accreditation cycle followed by a diagram and more detailed information in subsequent sections.

Initial Visit Process

The initial visit process includes the following:

- ✓ The purpose of the one-or two-day visit by a two-member team is to understand the school's purpose, its program, and operations based upon the WASC criteria and detailed school description.
- ✓ If the Commission grants candidacy, the school addresses recommendations from the Visiting Committee Report and completes first full self-study by the end of the third year

Self-Study Process and Full Visit

The self-study process and full visit entails the following:

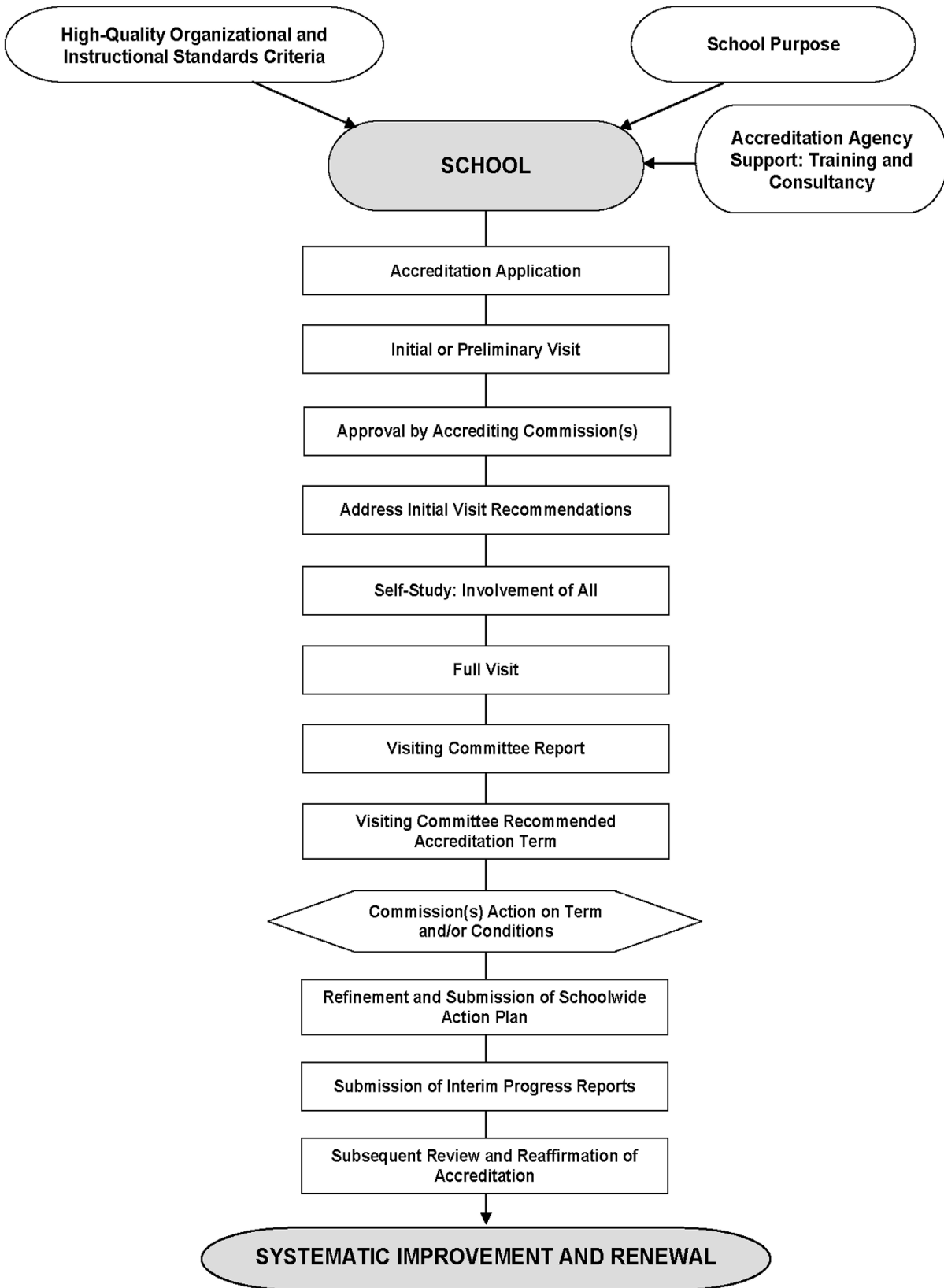
- ✓ Involvement of all stakeholders in self-study process
- ✓ Clarification of the school's purpose and the schoolwide student goals (expected schoolwide learning results)
- ✓ Assessment of student program and its impact on student learning with respect to the WASC criteria
- ✓ Development of a schoolwide action plan that addresses identified areas for improvement
- ✓ Visiting Committee validation and enhancement based on accreditation criteria/standards, self-study and findings from visit

Follow-Up Process

The follow-up process includes the following:

- ✓ Annual assessment of action plan progress and refinement of plan as needed
- ✓ Completion of progress reports and/or reviews, e.g., annual reports
- ✓ Celebration of success

ACCREDITATION: A COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS



Basic Principles of the Program

WASC has some basic principles which guide its program of evaluation and accreditation:

1. The primary goals of evaluation and accreditation are the self-improvement of the school and quality assurance for users.
2. The self-evaluation process by the staff and community of a school, with the assistance of pertinent self-study instruments, is the primary basis for evaluation and accreditation of a school.
3. The report of a Visiting Committee, based on the school's self-study and evaluation and on-site observation, shall serve as the primary basis for action by WASC.
4. The WASC Commissioners, after study and discussion of the Visiting Committee Report, shall grant accreditation for a specific term.
5. The WASC Commissioners grant accreditation when the school provides compelling evidence (a) that it is substantially accomplishing its stated purposes and functions identified as appropriate for an institution of its type, and (b) that the school is meeting an acceptable level of quality in accordance with the WASC criteria adopted by the Accrediting Commission.

Eligibility for Accreditation

WASC extends its services to public, independent, church-related, and proprietary schools of the following levels and types: elementary schools, junior high, middle, or intermediate schools, high schools, adult schools, regional occupation centers, and vocational skills centers. Preschool programs which are part of accredited elementary or secondary institutions may be accredited as part of the school's overall accreditation process.

Those institutions that are in the territory served by WASC are eligible for consideration for evaluation and accreditation.

An overseas school may seek accreditation and be granted candidate status or initial status when it is fully operative by the Accrediting Commission and meets the expectations for an international school. Candidacy indicates that an institution has achieved recognition and is progressing toward, but does not assume, full accreditation. The candidate for accreditation classification is designed for institutions that are not yet ready for the full evaluation based on the WASC criteria for accreditation. The institution must provide evidence of sound planning with sufficient resources to implement these plans, and must appear to have the potential for attaining its goals within a reasonable time. Initial status indicates that a school meets the organizational and support criteria for full accreditation and has a history and support system which indicate that a high-quality program can be sustained into the foreseeable future. See "WASC Initial Visit Procedures Manual," WASC website: www.acswasc.org/pdf_fol/FOL_Initial_visit_procedures.pdf.

An institution that applies for accreditation completes an initial “Request for WASC Affiliation” located on the “Getting Started” page of the WASC website: www.acswasc.org/getstarted.htm. The school will then be provided with an “Initial Visit Application/School Description” form that is completed and used by the WASC-appointed Visiting Committee members. They prepare a report for the WASC Accrediting Commission and the school based on the conditions of eligibility.

This report becomes the basis for action by WASC, which may grant candidacy or initial accreditation for a period not to exceed three years. Though schools may be granted an extension, the expectation is that they seek full accreditation during the first three-year term. Schools which attain candidacy or initial status are listed as such in the annual Accrediting Commission of Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges “WASC Directory of Schools.”

Each institution is evaluated on the basis of the WASC criteria and the appropriateness, for an institution of its type, of the purposes and functions outlined in its statement of objectives and on the degree to which the school accomplishes these purposes and functions. The rubrics for the WASC criteria within the “Initial Visit Procedures Manual” are helpful to the school with respect to readiness for the initial visit.

Application Procedure

Letters of inquiry and requests for application forms should be addressed to:

Executive Director
Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC
533 Airport Boulevard, Suite 200
Burlingame, California 94010

Additional WASC contact information is the following:

Phone: (650) 696-1060
Fax: (650) 696-1867
Email: mail@acswasc.org
Website: www.acswasc.org

Information may be obtained at the EARCOS Conference held annually in November. WASC representatives will be present each year to meet with individuals or groups from schools interested in being accredited. Trainings and meetings on evaluation and accreditation are also held at that time to provide a continuing communications link between WASC and the accredited schools in EARCOS.

Self-Study Instruments and Procedures

An institution that applies for full accreditation will be provided with documents that have been designed in cooperation with EARCOS to meet the unique needs of overseas schools. This includes instruments to which WASC has given input and that the WASC Commission has approved; examples of these include WASC/ACSI and WASC/CIS protocols. The entire staff and representatives of the student body and community are to be involved in the preparation of

the self-study that is accomplished over a period of several months. Training and support is provided for schools throughout the EARCOS region. At least four weeks prior to the visit, the completed self-study is sent to the members of the Visiting Committee. After studying the report and spending several days at the school, the Visiting Committee prepares a report for the school that outlines the school's strengths and identifies areas to receive attention in a continuing process of school improvement. This report becomes the basis upon which the Commission grants a term of accreditation.

Visiting Committees

Visiting Committees usually spend four or five days at an overseas school. The size of the committee that is led by a Visiting Committee chair is dependent upon the size of the school. The members of the committee will be from overseas schools in the general geographic area of the school being accredited; and most teams will have one member from the United States.

All invitations to serve on the Visiting Committee are extended by the Executive Director of WASC, but nominations and suggestions are invited from the participating schools. It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to see that each committee is composed of members who have the background and experience appropriate for the school being visited. Teachers and administrators who desire to participate on a Visiting Committee should submit their nominations through the chief administrative officer of the school in which they are employed. Expenses are paid by the school being visited. Released time is provided by the school at which the committee member is employed.

Progress and Follow-up

Each school is expected to give attention to the resulting critical areas for follow-up or recommendations by integrating them into the schoolwide action plan that was refined as a result of the school's self-study/visit. A copy of this updated action plan is submitted to the Accrediting Commission after the full visit; this is to be sent by either January 1 or June 1 based upon the date of the visit. The Visiting Committee Report and the school's Self-Study Report are resources for studying needs of the school, setting priorities, and allocating resources. WASC does not set these priorities for the school nor are any of its critical areas for follow-up/recommendations mandated. It does, however, require that attention and consideration be given to them, so the Interim and Midterm Progress Reports are an essential component of the procedures. Self-studies are usually conducted on a five- or six-year cycle. With each subsequent self-study, a progress report, based on recommendations of the previous Visiting Committee, must be included. The process is a continuing and systematic program of evaluation and school improvement with WASC accreditation as the symbol of such involvement.

Accreditation

WASC Commissioners will meet at regularly scheduled times to consider accreditation for schools. The commissioners will have received, prior to the meeting, the following materials: a Visiting Committee Report, and a justification statement accompanied by criteria documentation for a recommended term of accreditation. At these meetings, this information will be discussed, and the school reports will be available for reference. The commissioners will allow as much time as is necessary to discuss the findings of the Visiting Committees, and the supporting evidence found in the school self-studies. This assures that each school receives full and fair consideration. The decisions of the WASC Commission are the composite judgments of these individuals.

The term of accreditation is based in part upon the appropriateness of the school's stated goals and objectives for an institution of its type and the degree to which these goals and objectives are being met. The other determinant for accreditation is the degree to which the school meets the WASC criteria that are established as general guidelines to determine the effectiveness of a school's educational program and services to support high-quality student learning.

The decision of the WASC Commission regarding the term of accreditation, or denial of accreditation, may be appealed. The chief administrator(s) of the school must make any such appeal by letter, specifying the basis for the appeal within sixty days after receipt of notification of action of the Commission.

Terms of Accreditation

The Commission shall grant terms of accreditation based on the recommendation of the Visiting Committee, and the content of the Visiting Committee Report. The recommendation of the Visiting Committee shall be based on evidence contained in the self-study and encountered during the school visit which indicates the degree to which schoolwide learning is occurring and the capacity of the school to implement, monitor, and accomplish the schoolwide action plan. Terms of accreditation may be granted for a maximum of six years*. A limited term is intended as a positive action to reinforce the efforts of the school to improve. All terms of accreditation that are granted by action of the WASC Commission start on July 1 and expire on June 30.

Terms of accreditation of one to six years may be granted*:

- Schools that are granted **full terms of six years** shall be required to submit written progress reports on **all** the recommendations to their governing boards and to the WASC Commission during the third year of the term and have a two-day midterm visit.
- Schools that are granted **three-year terms** of accreditation shall be required to prepare a progress report on **all** recommendations and schedule a two-day revisit.

* Schools that are choosing WASC/CIS, WASC/NCCT, WASC/ONESQA, or integrating IBO evaluations with their WASC processes will conduct renewals or reaccreditation on a five- or six-year cycle with the midterm or preparatory visit adjusted accordingly. The organizations will work on a "case-by-case" basis with each school.

- A school may be granted a **one or two-year term** of accreditation to serve as a “warning” that, unless the school gives prompt attention to the concerns expressed, accreditation shall be denied. Schools shall be required to prepare a progress report on **all** recommendations and schedule a two-day revisit.
- In cases of denial of accreditation, the institution shall be notified in writing the reasons for such denial.

Reports, Reviews, and Revisits

Reports, reviews and revisits are an integral part of all terms granted, because improvement comes through the implementation of the recommendations evolving from the Self-Study Report and the Visiting Committee Report. WASC and the EARCOS Accreditation Committee have specifically designed a system of reviews and revisits for EARCOS schools. Below are descriptions of these reviews and reports

Candidacy Report

Schools that are in candidacy status with WASC and belong to EARCOS have the responsibility to provide annual Candidacy Reports to the Executive Director of WASC. This report format includes a brief school description, a description of any significant changes at your school since the candidate visit, and a response to the recommendations left by the Visiting Committee indicating the progress made in response to the recommendations.

Interim Progress Report

1. Definition

This is a brief report of two to four pages limited to the **major** recommendations or schoolwide critical areas of follow-up.

- a. The school Follow-up Committee reviews the major recommendations or schoolwide critical areas of follow-up and reports progress on each one.
- b. The report includes explanations where no progress has been made or where new circumstances or conditions at the school have occurred since the last visit.

2. Format for the Interim Progress Report

- a. General data on the school:
 - School Name
 - Address
 - Telephone, fax, e-mail numbers
 - Chief administrator of school
 - Enrollment
- b. Brief description:
 - Type of school
 - Organization/governing structure/financial base
 - Students served
 - Faculty
 - Curricular program
 - Major changes or conditions impacting the school improvement process since the last visit/report

- c. Body of report:
 - Instructions for schools that used the *Focus on Learning* protocol
 - Comment on the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section.
 - Indicate how the school through its action plan has accomplished each of the critical areas for follow-up that were stated in the Visiting Committee Report.
 - Cite evidence, including how progress in each area has impacted the accomplishment of one or more expected schoolwide learning results.
 - Particularly discuss progress since the last interim report. Include an explanation where no progress has been made.
 - *Instructions for schools that used another protocol approved by the WASC Commission (not Focus on Learning)*
 - List each major recommendation.
 - Write a brief narrative explaining progress on each one.
 - Include an explanation where no progress has been made.

3. Sending Copies of the Interim Progress Report

Send one copy to the Executive Director of WASC prior to June 1 of the academic year in which it is due and share it with the Board of Trustees. The EARCOS Accreditation Committee will review annually the interim progress reports submitted during the preceding year as a means of monitoring the evaluation/accreditation program. Schools receiving the U.S. Department of State, Office of Overseas Schools (A/OS) support should also send a copy to A/OS.

Midterm Reports and Review

1. Definition

The Midterm Progress Report is a complete follow-up on all of the recommendations or suggested growth areas of the previous Visiting Committee. These should have been integrated into the school's action plan. The school empanels a Follow-up Committee, prepares the report and is scheduled for a midterm visit during the third year after the self-study and visit.

- a. The school Follow-up Committee represents administration, faculty, non-teaching staff, students, and community.
- b. The Follow-up Committee reviews all critical areas for follow-up or recommendations of the previous Visiting Committee to report progress on these as they were addressed through the schoolwide action plan sections.
- c. The report includes an explanation of any instances where no progress has been made on a critical area for follow-up or recommendation.
- d. The Follow-up Committee should indicate any new circumstances or conditions at the school that have occurred since the last visit.

2. Format for the Midterm Progress Report

- a. Include the updated basic student/community profile from the prior full self-study: general description of the school, schoolwide student goals, student demographics, faculty/staff demographics, analytical summary of disaggregated and interpreted student achievement data.
- b. Describe any significant developments, including program additions, since the last full self-study.
- c. Comment on the school's procedures for the implementation and the monitoring of the schoolwide action plan, noting the integration of the critical areas for follow-up or recommendations from the Visiting Committee Report. Include how annual progress reports as well as this Midterm Progress Report have been prepared.
- d. Comment on the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section; cite evidence including how each area has impacted student achievement, i.e., accomplishment of one or more of the schoolwide learning results and academic standards.
- e. In each schoolwide action plan section, reference which critical areas of follow-up have been addressed.

3. Copies of the Midterm Progress Report

- a. Send one copy of the report to the Midterm Review Visiting Committee chairperson and the other member of the team so that they will receive it approximately four weeks before they are scheduled to visit the school.
- b. Send one copy of the report to the WASC office.

4. Midterm Visiting Committee

- a. The Midterm Visiting Committee will be comprised of a WASC Visiting Committee chairperson and member. The Midterm Visiting Committee will normally spend two and one-half days at the school visiting with staff members and students, preparing the report, and reporting to the staff. Where a school has separate campuses, an additional day may be scheduled to provide adequate time for the visit.
- b. The WASC office will provide copies of prior Visiting Committee Reports and updated action plan submitted after the last full visit.
- c. The chairperson utilizes the original report and subsequent progress reports to begin planning the two and one-half day visit. The schoolwide critical areas for follow-up or major recommendations that should have been integrated into the schoolwide action plan will be a guide in determining areas of focus during the visit.
- d. The chairperson reviews with the principal the follow-up activities which have occurred in response to the original report and any significant developments at the school. The chairperson emphasizes the importance of the school noting growth or lack thereof in student achievement based on the school's follow-up activities through multiple means of assessment.

- e. The chairperson and the school leadership determine the most valuable use of the time during the visit and develop a schedule, including the initial meetings of the Visiting Committee and the school's leadership team on the afternoon prior to the two and one-half day visit.
- f. The chairperson communicates all information to the other member of the on-site review committee.

5. Midterm Visiting Committee Report

- a. The Midterm Visiting Committee will prepare a report highlighting areas in which progress has been made and identifying those areas that should receive continued attention. **This midterm report will supersede the original Visiting Committee Report.** The Midterm Visiting Committee will have carefully reviewed the original Visiting Committee Report and included any recommendations in the midterm report that have not been addressed and added others as seen appropriate by the Visiting Committee.
- b. The report should also generally describe the conditions at the school, highlighting any major changes that have occurred since the previous visit.
- c. The Midterm Visiting Committee makes no recommendation to the Commission unless it deems that progress has not been satisfactory; in which case it may recommend to the Commission that another progress report and visit be required prior to the next scheduled self-study. It should be noted that this would apply only where it appears conditions are such that the school would no longer meet the criteria for accreditation.
- d. If a school desires a more complete, in-depth report, requests should be made well in advance to schedule the committee for additional time at the school.

Suggested Format of the Midterm Visiting Committee Report

Introduction

- ✓ General comments about the school and its setting are made.
- ✓ Significant changes or developments that have affected the school since the last visit are noted.
- ✓ A description of the follow-up process, including a description of the committee that has been responsible for overseeing the progress on the school's action plan and preparing the report.

Follow-up Process

- ✓ Comment on the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section, noting how the critical areas for follow-up have been addressed through each section.

Recommendations

- ✓ Write recommendations where additional attention is needed in the action plan regarding previous areas for improvement or identified new concerns.

Confidential On-Site Review Justification Statement

- ✓ The chairperson of the on-site review committee submits a confidential summary statement to the Accrediting Commission regarding the progress of the school in responding to the schoolwide critical areas for follow-up or major recommendations and whether additional visits or other conditions should be required of the school during the remainder of its six-year term.
- ✓ The committee must recommend one of the following: reaffirm the six-year term, require additional information in the next annual or interim report, an additional visit, or other action to be determined by the Commission. Please be sure this recommendation is clear.

6. Copies of the Midterm Visiting Committee Report

- a. The **chairperson** is responsible to see that the school receives one copy of the Midterm Visiting Committee Report.
- b. The chairperson sends the report and the justification statement via email to the WASC office (email to mail@acswasc.org).
- c. The school is responsible for duplicating and distributing the number of copies of the report deemed appropriate for use with staff and community.

7. Commission Action

- a. Midterm Visiting Committee Reports will be reviewed by the staff of the Commission and by the Commission itself when recommended by the staff.
- b. The Commission will take no action unless it deems that there has been insufficient attention to the recommendations or that satisfactory progress has not been made. In such a situation it may place a school on a one-year “show cause” order warning the school that accreditation may be terminated or another progress report and on-site visit may be requested.

8. Expenses for the Visit

See page 35 of this handbook for visit expense information.

Three-Year Term Reports and Revisit

1. Definition

If a school receives a three-year term of accreditation as a result of their full self-study visit, a Three-Year Term Progress Report is prepared and a visit scheduled during the final year of the limited term. The school's Three-Year Term Progress Report is a complete follow-up report on **all** the recommendations or critical areas of follow-up of the previous full self-study's Visiting Committee. Details are outlined below.

2. School Progress Report Format

- a. Include the updated basic student/community profile from the prior full self-study: general description of the school, schoolwide student goals, student demographics, faculty/staff demographics, analytical summary of disaggregated and interpreted student achievement data.
- b. Describe any significant developments, including program additions, since the last full self-study.
- c. Comment on the school's procedures for the implementation and the monitoring of the schoolwide action plan, noting the integration of the critical areas for follow-up or recommendations from the Visiting Committee Report. Include how annual progress reports as well as this Three-Year Term Progress Report have been prepared.
- d. Comment on the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section; cite evidence including how each area has impacted student achievement, i.e., accomplishment of one or more of the schoolwide learning results and academic standards.
- e. In each schoolwide action plan section, reference which critical areas of follow-up have been addressed.

3. Additional Previsit Procedures for School

- a. The Progress Report should be completed at least 4–5 weeks before the revisit and mailed to the appropriate personnel; this should provide quality preparation time for the Revisit Committee.

Forward the following items to the **chair** and Visiting Committee member(s) of the revisit team:

- 1) Progress Report (mail at least 5 weeks before the visit)
 - 2) Note: WASC will send copies of the recent full Visiting Committee Report and any additional reports, such as interim reports, to the Visiting Committee chair.
- b. In addition, share the Progress Report with those listed below:
 - 1) Entire school staff as part of ongoing follow-up
 - 2) Executive Director, Accrediting Commission for Schools
533 Airport Blvd., Suite 200
Burlingame, CA 94010

- c. The principal works closely with the Revisit Committee Chair in planning the schedule for the two and one-half day visit and is responsible for all logistical arrangements, such as lodging, work room, etc. In addition, the principal makes certain that all necessary paperwork is mailed in a timely fashion.

4. Three-Year Term Revisit Visiting Committee Previsit Preparation

- a. WASC should provide the chair with a copy of the original Visiting Committee Report and any subsequent WASC reports, if applicable.
- b. The chair and head of school or principal discuss what has occurred since the last visit, such as school changes and ongoing follow-up.
- c. The chair utilizes the original report as a reference to begin planning the visit. The identified areas for growth and the school’s action plan will guide areas of focus during the visit.
- d. The chair and the principal determine how to use time most productively during the visit and establish a schedule. This may involve meetings with staff, students, parents, district representatives, and other school community members and classroom visits.
- e. Upon receipt and analysis of the Progress Report, the chair finalizes the schedule for the revisit.
- f. The chair communicates all information to the other members of the Revisit Committee.

5. Three-Year Term Revisit Committee Report

- a. At the end of the visit, the Revisit Committee will have an exit conference with the school’s leadership team to review the visiting team’s findings.
- b. Immediately following the revisit, the Revisit Committee will prepare a brief report that comments on progress made and areas that still need to be addressed by the school.

Suggested format of the Revisit Committee Report

I. Introduction (1/2–1 page)

- ✓ General comments about the school and its setting and the school’s analysis of student achievement data
- ✓ Significant changes or developments that have affected the school since the full visit

II. Follow-up Process (1/2–1 page)

Briefly comment upon the school’s process for follow-up, including the capacity of the school to monitor implementation and accomplishment of the areas for improvement as recommended by the previous visiting committee.

III. School's Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up (2–4 pages but more may be needed)

- ✓ Comment on the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section, noting which critical areas for follow-up have been addressed through each section. In this succinct summary of the school's progress since the full visit, comment on any observable impact on student learning.
- ✓ Recommendations: Priority and/or Additional Areas for Improvement: Identify and note any areas that need to be given priority for the school's ongoing improvement. (This may also include critical areas for follow-up.) Identify new areas of concerns, if applicable.
- ✓ Commendations Related to Progress: Note and report on significant progress the school has made in responding to the critical areas for follow-up and in carrying out the related action plan.

6. Post-Visit Duties of Three-Year Term Revisit Committee

- a. The Revisit Committee makes a confidential recommendation to the Commission to deny or extend accreditation. The committee may recommend an extension of three years, one year, or denial of accreditation. The Commission then makes the final term determination and sends official notification to the school.
- b. The Revisit Committee completes the confidential recommendation (ballot) and a one or two page justification statement supporting the confidential recommendation. The chair is responsible for sending the ballot and justification statement, along with a copy of the Visiting Committee Report to the WASC office.

Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC
533 Airport Boulevard, Suite 200
Burlingame, CA 94010

Note: The report and justification statement may be sent via email to mail@acs-wasc.org; the signed ballot should be mailed.

- c. The chair also sends a copy of the completed Visiting Committee Report (without the attached confidential ballot or justification statement) to the school. If the school has not received a final copy of the Revisit Committee Report within 2 weeks following the visit, the school should contact the chairperson.

7. Possible Terms of Accreditation

- a. A Three-Year Term Revisit Committee may recommend the following terms:
 - ✓ Three additional years
 - ✓ One additional year
 - ✓ Denial of accreditation
- b. At the next regularly scheduled meeting, the Accrediting Commission for Schools will make a decision regarding the accredited status of the school.

This action will be based on the Progress Report submitted by the school, the Visiting Committee Report, and the confidential recommendation of the Revisit Committee. Immediately following this meeting, the school will be informed of the Commission action. The chairperson will receive a copy of the official letter sent to the school.

8. Expenses for the Visit

See page 35 of this handbook for visit expense information.

Limited-Term Reports and Revisit (One- or Two-Year Terms)

1. Definition

The Revisit Progress Report is a complete follow-up report on **all** the recommendations or critical areas of follow-up of the previous Visiting Committee. The school prepares the report and a revisit is scheduled during the final year of the limited term.

2. School Progress Report Format

- a. Include the updated basic student/community profile from the prior full self-study: general description of the school, schoolwide student goals, student demographics, faculty/staff demographics, analytical summary of disaggregated and interpreted student achievement data.
- b. Describe any significant developments, including program additions, since the last full self-study.
- c. Comment on the school's procedures for the implementation and the monitoring of the schoolwide action plan, noting the integration of the critical areas for follow-up or recommendations from the Visiting Committee Report. Include how all annual progress reports, including this current report, have been prepared.
- d. Comment on the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section; cite evidence including how each area has impacted student achievement, i.e., accomplishment of one or more of the schoolwide learning results and academic standards.
- e. In each schoolwide action plan section, reference which critical areas of follow-up have been addressed.

3. Additional Previsit Procedures for School

- a. The Progress Report should be completed at least 4–5 weeks before the revisit and mailed to the appropriate personnel; this should provide quality preparation time for the Revisit Committee.

Forward the following items to the **chair** and Visiting Committee member(s) of the revisit team:

- 1) Progress Report (mail at least 5 weeks before the visit)
- 2) Note: WASC will send copies of the recent full Visiting Committee Report and any additional reports, such as interim reports, to the Visiting Committee chair.

- b. In addition, share the Progress Report with those listed below:
 - 1) Entire school staff as part of ongoing follow-up
 - 2) Executive Director, Accrediting Commission for Schools
533 Airport Blvd., Suite 200
Burlingame, CA 94010
- c. The principal works closely with the Revisit Committee Chair in planning the schedule for the two and one-half day visit and is responsible for all logistical arrangements, such as lodging, work room, etc. In addition, the principal makes certain that all necessary paperwork is mailed in a timely fashion.

4. Limited-Term Revisit Visiting Committee Previsit Preparation

- a. WASC should provide the chair with a copy of the original Visiting Committee Report and any subsequent WASC reports, if applicable.
- b. The chair and head of school or principal discuss what has occurred since the last visit, such as school changes and ongoing follow-up.
- c. The chair utilizes the original report as a reference to begin planning the visit. The identified areas for growth and the school's action plan will guide areas of focus during the visit.
- d. The chair and the principal determine how to use time most productively during the visit and establish a schedule. This may involve meetings with staff, students, parents, district representatives, and other school community members and classroom visits.
- e. Upon receipt and analysis of the Progress Report, the chair finalizes the schedule for the revisit.
- f. The chair communicates all information to the other members of the Revisit Committee.

5. Limited-Term Revisit Committee Report

- a. At the end of the visit, the Revisit Committee will have an exit conference with the school's leadership team to review the visiting team's findings.
- b. Immediately following the revisit, the Revisit Committee will prepare a brief report that comments on progress made and areas that still need to be addressed by the school.

Suggested format of the Limited-Term Revisit Committee Report

- I. Introduction (1/2–1 page)
 - ✓ General comments about the school and its setting and the school's analysis of student achievement data
 - ✓ Significant changes or developments that have affected the school since the full visit
- II. Follow-up Process (1/2–1 page)

- ✓ Description of the follow-up process, including a description of the committee that has been responsible for overseeing the progress of the school's action plan and preparing the visit.

III. School's Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up (2–4 pages but more may be needed)

- ✓ Comment on the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section, noting how the critical areas for follow-up have been incorporated. Include pertinent comments on the impact on student achievement.
- ✓ Recommendations: Priority and/or Additional Areas for Improvement
 - Write recommendations stating where additional attention is needed in the action plan regarding previous areas for improvement.
 - Identify new concerns, if applicable.
- ✓ Commendations Related to Progress: Note and report on significant progress the school has made in responding to the critical areas for follow-up and in carrying out the related action plan.

6. Post-Visit Duties of Limited-Term Revisit Committee

- a. The Revisit Committee makes a confidential recommendation to the Commission to deny or extend accreditation. See the Possible Terms of Accreditation subsection below. The Commission then makes the final term determination and sends official notification to the school.
- b. The Revisit Committee completes the confidential recommendation (ballot) and a one or two page justification statement supporting the confidential recommendation. The chair is responsible for sending the ballot and justification statement, along with a copy of the Visiting Committee Report to the WASC office.

Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC
 533 Airport Boulevard, Suite 200
 Burlingame, CA 94010

Note: The report and justification statement may be sent via email to mail@acs-wasc.org; the signed ballot should be mailed.

- c. The chair also sends a copy of the completed Visiting Committee Report (without the attached confidential ballot or justification statement) to the school. If the school has not received a final copy of the Revisit Committee Report within 2 weeks following the visit, the school should contact the chairperson.

7. Possible Terms of Accreditation

WASC accreditation is based on a six-year cycle, with a full self-study visit occurring every six years. Schools that receive a One- or Two-Year Limited Term as a result of their full self-study are automatically required to participate in a two and one-half day, Three-Year Term Revisit at the three-year mark in the cycle. A Three-Year Term Revisit is an in-depth revisit with a visiting committee of two to five members, based on enrollment at the school. Revisits do not take place during the fifth year of the accreditation cycle as schools are busy preparing for their next full self-study. Therefore, recommended terms cannot take a school to the five-year point. A successful Three-Year Term Revisit can result in an additional three-year term being granted — taking the school to the end of their six-year cycle without any additional WASC visits.

Recommendation choices available to the Revisit Committee will depend on the accreditation term the school was granted as a result of their last visit and where they are in their six-year cycle.

- **Current One-Year Term:** Schools that currently have a one-year limited term can receive a recommendation for a **one-year term**, a **two-year term**, or a **denial of accreditation**, depending on where they are in the WASC six-year accreditation cycle. Once a school has received a limited term they are automatically required to have a Three-Year Term Revisit three years after their last full self-study and they also need to have a Full Self-Study Visit at the six-year mark. The recommendations options available will depend on where the school is in relation to this six-year cycle.
- **Current Two-Year Term:** Schools that currently have a two-year limited term as a result of a full self-study visit can receive a recommendation for either a **one-year term** or a **denial of accreditation**. Unless the term of accreditation is denied, a school receiving a recommendation for a one-year term will automatically be scheduled for a Three-Year Term Revisit the year following this revisit.

8. Expenses for the Visit

See page 35 of this handbook for visit expense information.

Policy and Procedure for Substantive Change

In the event of a substantive change at an accredited school, WASC Bylaws require an on-site review as a basis for continued accreditation. Substantive change includes a change in ownership of a proprietary school, change in grade level configuration of a school, or relocation of a school. Other changes which might be regarded as substantive and therefore require an on-site review for continued accreditation are a change in the basic purpose of the school or a change in the governance, any of which might dramatically alter the quality or nature of the educational program in relation to the student body.

It is the obligation of the chief administrator and the chairman of the board to formally notify the Executive Director of WASC of any changes which might be substantive with an explanation of the change and the anticipated effect on the educational program. It shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director of WASC, to decide whether the change is substantive and whether an on-site review should be scheduled to determine the continued accredited status of the school.

The procedure for review of an EARCOS WASC School undergoing a change shall be as follows:

1. In the event of a change that is or may be substantive, the chief administrator and the chairman of the board shall notify the Executive Director of EARCOS, who will notify the chairman and members of the accreditation committee.
2. This notice shall include a description of the nature of the change and its apparent effect on the instructional program of the school.
3. The Executive Director of WASC shall decide whether the change is substantive and whether an on-site visit should be scheduled to determine the continued accredited status of the school. The Executive Director of WASC shall notify the school in writing of the decision.
4. When an on-site review is scheduled:
 - a. The Executive Director of WASC shall designate two persons to visit the school to review the nature of the change and its apparent effect on the educational program.
 - b. The travel and per diem expenses of this committee shall be the responsibility of the school.
 - c. This committee shall prepare a report for the Commission and the school. It will include a recommendation regarding the continued accredited status of the school. The structure of the report is the following:
 - Introduction (Background)
 - Findings (regarding the Substantive Change)
 - Recommendation (regarding continued accreditation incorporating the substantive change)
 - d. The school shall be notified in writing of the action of the Accrediting Commission for Schools.

WASC Fee Schedule and Costs 2011–2012 East Asia Schools

Annual Membership Fees

Elementary Schools – accredited or candidate.....	\$ 500.00
Intermediate Schools – accredited or candidate.....	\$ 756.00
Secondary Schools – accredited or candidate.....	\$ 756.00

Visiting Committee Fees

Overseas schools shall pay the following administrative fees in addition to the actual expenses of any on-site visit.

Application fee.....	\$ 150.00
Initial Visit fee	\$ 600.00
Self-Study/Renewal Visit fee.....	\$ 600.00
Substantive Change Visit fee (per site).....	\$ 400.00
Revisit or Midterm Review fee (includes any time a two-member committee makes an on-site visit).....	\$ 600.00
Special Visit.....	\$ 750.00
WASC/CIS Preparatory Visit.....	\$ 600.00
Postponement or Cancellation of Visit fee after visiting committee has been assigned	\$ 500.00
Validation fee (appeal)	\$ 750.00

Fee schedule effective 7/01/11.

Travel Expenses

- a. The school pays the lodging and meal costs of the chairperson during the course of the visit and for one day prior to and one day after, if needed, for a full self-study visit. WASC will pay the travel costs of members from California or Hawaii and then bill the school for reimbursement.
- b. The school pays the lodging, meals, and travel expenses incurred by the members of the Visiting Committee in connection with the visit.

Office of Overseas School's Assistance

To encourage “government assisted schools” to become accredited, the Office of Overseas Schools (A/OS) of the Department of State provides a grant to WASC to assist in paying the travel expenses of the chairpersons and/or consultants to come from the U.S. to work with these schools. Such schools pay the costs that are incurred above those covered by the grant.