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GUIDE FOR EVALUATORS

Staff

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wishes to thank you for joining the visiting team in an evaluation of an American/international school. Our accreditation program is a three-step process:

- A self-study conducted by the school requesting accreditation.
- An evaluation by a visiting team of experienced educators.
- A follow-up program in which the school addresses recommendations by the NEASC and its visiting team.

The school has recently completed the first phase, the self-study. Now it is ready to host a visiting team to determine whether the school is worthy of initial or continued accreditation and your task is to help the team in those deliberations.

Your task as an evaluator will be to complete team assignments and individual assignments. Team assignments are those which you'll share with others, such as attendance at team meetings, assisting team members in group tasks, and participating in joint interviews. The team chair has laid out these team assignments in the team schedule. Plan your individual tasks so that they don't conflict with the team schedule.

Individual assignments are those for which you are responsible, such as evaluating subject areas and the section on the school's Staff. In a sense, you'll become the team's expert on these portions of the visiting team report. Completing these tasks will entail classroom observations, group and individual interviews, discussions with other team members, examination of school resources, and deliberations on the school's accreditation status.

Before the Visit

When you arrive at the school, you will be immersed in evaluation activities almost immediately. Time will be very precious. For that reason, we strongly advise you to become familiar with all documents before you leave home. Every hour you spend preparing beforehand will be worth many hours during the evaluation.

- A. Study the following materials which will give you an overview of the school:
 1. Community, School, Student Profiles
 2. Opinion Surveys
 3. School's Philosophy and Objectives

- B. Review the full self-study, examining thoroughly the documents that relate to your individual assignments.
- C. Take notes on the standards and indicators on Staff provided below. From these notes, write questions for your meetings with members of the school community.
- D. Arrive at the school prepared to discuss your preliminary findings with your colleagues on the visiting team.
- E. Consult the glossary at the end of the guide for terms which are unfamiliar to you. (Appendix A.)

Standards and Indicators on Staff

This report must indicate how well the staff has understood its significant role in carrying out the standards on Staff and how clearly it has conveyed its mission to meet the student needs.

In order to write this report, you will read materials prepared by the school and meet with individuals and groups representative of the whole staff. Such discussions with a variety of staff members will afford you opportunity to ascertain the degree to which the staff focuses on their mission of providing the best educational delivery system possible to the students.

Your task will be to determine whether the entire staff is working independently and collaboratively to assure that the school's philosophy is implemented, its objectives are achieved and its standards are met. Additionally, you will ascertain the degree to which the staff is cooperating to create a positive school climate and a culture that promotes universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Finally, you will assess whether the staff is given every opportunity to utilize their respective talents and skills to enable students to benefit from the educational experiences and services provided.

In order to complete your assignment, you will read self-study materials, observe the school in operation, and meet with individuals and groups.

The school will be evaluated on the basis of all NEASC standards and indicators. The evaluation of the staff will be based on the standards which are printed below in bold letters followed by their related indicators:

1. **The school shall have management, teaching and support staff, sufficient in numbers and with qualifications and competencies to carry out satisfactorily the school's programs, services and activities.**
 - 1a. The teacher-student ratio is adequate to provide meaningful learning experiences.
 - 1b. The head of school assigns professional staff to those areas of teaching, and other work with students, for which they have professional competence.
 - 1c. The head of school assigns reasonable workloads to members of staff.

- 1d. There are procedures for identifying all staffing needs to ensure that the school can carry out its philosophy and objectives.
 - 1e. The head of school ensures that all members of staff have adequate supervision.
 - 1f. The head of school recruits and assigns a well-qualified staff.
- 2. The head of school shall ensure that there is a co-operative working relationship with all staff to facilitate proper utilization of their abilities.**
- 2a. Staff members work co-operatively to establish and maintain a positive school climate.
 - 2b. There are opportunities for the staff to be consulted on professional matters.
- 3. The staff shall act professionally in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.**
- 3a. The staff utilizes methods and practices, which are consistent with the school's philosophy and objectives.
 - 3b. Staff members comply with all applicable statutes, government laws and regulations.
 - 3c. Members of the staff maintain a high level of preparation in their area of responsibility.
 - 3d. Members of the teaching staff foster teaching-learning situations to meet the needs of the individual students.
 - 3e. Teaching staff is involved in the review of teaching and learning.
- 4. There shall be written and available personnel policies and practices for all staff.**
- 4a. School policies include:
 - a statement on non-discrimination
 - provision for adequate staff development
 - provision for the evaluation and accountability of staff
 - a statement on Governing Body/staff relationship
 - procedures on recruitment, appointment, promotion and retirement
 - 4b. Written and available personnel policies and practices are in place which provide for:
 - reasonable workloads
 - acceptable working conditions
 - ethical treatment
 - professional satisfaction
 - good general morale among all segments of the staff.
 - 4c. An updated staff handbook is available to all.
- 5. All staff shall be employed under written contracts which state the principal terms of agreement between members of staff and the governing body, and which provide for adequate salaries and fringe benefits.**
- 5a. The school makes clear the factors which are taken into account in calculating individual staff member's remuneration.
 - 5b. Compensation is paid to staff members promptly and in accordance with pre-determined schedule made known to members in advance of employment.
 - 5c. The school provides to each member of staff a written contract or employment agreement in which all the basic controlling factors of salary, benefits, assignments, length of term of initial service, date during which re-employment will be decided, and conditions of termination or abrogation are stated. (Note: If legal requirements or school convenience dictate that not all of these items be in a contract, then each individual is provided with a supporting document which is part of the contract by reference.)
- 6. There shall be a clearly defined and effective system of appraisal of staff, based on pre-determined and explicit criteria.**
- 6a. The school utilizes an effective performance appraisal system for all staff.
 - 6b. The appraisal is conducted with the full knowledge of the staff member and is reported in writing in a document accessible only to defined individuals.
 - 6c. Members of the teaching staff assess their own performance on a number of factors including individual student growth and development.

- 6d. The staff member has the opportunity to discuss and appeal against any aspect of the appraisal.

7. The school shall have a program of professional development for staff related to appraisal procedures and other priorities identified by the school.

- 7a. The school provides staff development for all employees.
7b. Staff members share responsibility with the school's management for the planning of programs for their professional growth.
7c. Members of the academic staff develop and participate in innovative programs designed to improve teaching and learning.
7d. Members of the teaching staff participate in curriculum development, the goals for which are identified annually by the school.
7e. Prior to the opening day of school, the management provides for the orientation of new staff members to acquaint them with the school's philosophy and objectives, its program and facilities and the host country.
7f. The school provides for induction and mentoring of staff wherever appropriate.

Please note: Every accredited school uses the standards and indicators listed above. Schools seeking initial or continued accreditation, however, are invited to suggest additional indicators to demonstrate their compliance with NEASC standards. Visiting team members should consider these additional indicators as they evaluate the school.

During the Visit

Tour of the School

School officials will guide the team on a tour of the school to acquaint them with the facilities and grounds. During that time you should pay particular attention to areas related to the section on Staff and any subject areas you have been assigned to evaluate. Please take notes on the following issues:

1. Are the general appearance and cleanliness of the campus satisfactory?
2. Do all school programs that you observe have dedicated areas? Are they adequate?
3. Do the building and grounds allow for efficient movement of people?
4. Are there any serious safety hazards in the facilities?
5. Are there any serious noise problems which disrupt classes?
6. Are there areas of the school that are not handicapped accessible?
7. Are there adequate space, facilities and equipment in the library, cafeteria, auditorium, small and large group areas and classrooms?

Team Orientation Meeting

On the first evening of your visit, the team chair may ask you to review the standard on Staff with the rest of the committee. If so, be prepared to give your initial perceptions, based on your reading of the self-study, and your observations of the school's adherence to the standards. Sharing your perception with team members may help you identify areas for further investigation. Keep in mind that school improvement is the ultimate goal of the evaluation.

Meet with Committees and Groups

During the evaluation you will meet with members of the school community to verify facts presented in the school's self-study and validate its conclusions. In addition, you should be able to determine whether community members concur with and support the philosophy, strive to attain its objectives, and revise policies and procedures periodically. From these discussions you will develop the reports for which you are responsible.

Techniques for Interviewing

Whenever you chair a meeting, you are expected to lead the discussion. You should have a series of prepared questions to allow the group the opportunity to express opinions, ideas, and concerns. Follow these simple guidelines to chair or participate in a discussion:

- Set the stage. Begin on time, even if everyone is not present. The meeting is too brief to waste time waiting for late arrivals.
- Call the group to order. Short introductions are appropriate.
- State the purpose of the meeting to the group.
- Begin the discussion with the general question that anyone might answer. Be sure to encourage as many people as possible to respond before asking a new question. Be sensitive to the dynamics of the group.
- Be confident. Don't be apologetic about your questions. When appropriate, clarify and summarize what's been said.
- Don't pose as an expert. Instead, ask for the information that you need in a straightforward manner.
- Don't dwell on an issue if the discussion is not productive.
- Control the meeting so that it doesn't stray from the questions you have prepared.
- Near the end of the meeting, ask if anyone has something additional to present and be sure to state your willingness to meet with individuals at a later time.
- Dismiss the group on time. Most participants will have other obligations.

Self-Study Committee on Staff

The self-study committee developed a sense of how well the school meets NEASC's standards on Staff. The committee should be able to provide the responses to the questions that follow. Do not share your judgments or conclusions with members of the self-study committee, but be certain to corroborate your impressions with others on the visiting team. During the meeting ask questions such as the following:

1. Has the staff changed in any significant ways since the self-study on Staff was last approved? Please explain.
2. How do you determine the effectiveness of the procedures used to appraise faculty, staff and supervisors?
3. How do you determine that management and staff are adequate in number to support school programs?
4. How often are the management and professional staff given an opportunity to engage in discussion of professional matters?
5. What measures are employed to assess how the staff carries out their professional duties and responsibilities?
6. Are personnel policies clear and available to all staff? How are they disseminated?

7. Are assignments equitable and reasonable in terms of conditions and responsibilities? Why do you believe that to be the case?
8. Does the school have clear policies regarding contracts, salaries and working conditions?
9. What measures does the school head utilize to ensure that a co-operative working relationship exists with all staff ?

Teachers and Paraprofessionals

The point of view of teachers and paraprofessionals is important to fully understand the extent to which the school meets the Standard on Staff. Ask questions such as the following:

1. Does the school have enough qualified teachers and support staff to provide meaningful learning experiences?
2. Do you believe that teaching assignments are equitable and reasonable in terms of conditions and responsibilities? Why?
3. What opportunities are provided to staff to discuss professional matters such as:
 - a) creating a positive school climate and culture?
 - b) improving the teaching and learning process?
 - c) designing professional development opportunities for staff?
 - d) revising policies and procedures as needed?
4. How would you assess the staff in professionally carrying out all duties and responsibilities consistent with the following:
 - a) the school's philosophy and objectives?
 - b) applicable statutes, government regulations and laws?
 - c) adequately meeting individual student's needs?
 - d) ongoing review of effective teaching and learning practices?
5. Are personnel policies available to teachers and support staff? How are they distributed?
6. How often is the faculty/staff handbook revised? Are the revisions reviewed with staff members when the handbook is distributed?
7. Does the school have clear policies and procedures regarding salaries, benefits and working conditions?
8. How effective is the staff appraisal system? Please elaborate.
 - a) Does it facilitate individual student growth and development?
 - b) Does it foster improved staff performance?
 - c) Does it allow for increased collaboration to effect positive change?
9. How would you assess the current professional development program?
 - a) Does it allow for collaborative planning for professional growth?
 - b) Does it focus on teaching and learning?
 - c) Does it involve orientation of new staff members?

Board

Meeting with board members is necessary to understand their relationship with the school head, management and staff. It also provides an opportunity to ascertain the degree of school head's autonomy and assess the school's commitment to professional growth. Ask questions such as:

1. What measures do you use to determine that there are sufficient and qualified administrators, teachers and support staff? Explain.
2. What considerations do you employ in judging the effectiveness of your relationship with the school staff? Do you have policies in this regard?
3. What measures are used to ensure that there is a co-operative working relationship between and among all staff?
4. What opportunities are provided to engage the staff in discussions on professional matters such as:
 - a) creating a positive school climate?
 - b) improving the teaching and learning process?
 - c) designing professional development opportunities for staff?
 - d) making recommendations regarding revisions relative to policies and procedures?
5. How would you assess the staff's implementation of professional duties and responsibilities regarding the:
 - a) school's philosophy and objectives?
 - b) applicable statutes, government regulations and laws?
 - c) adequate accommodation of individual student's needs?
 - d) ongoing review of effective teaching and learning practices?
6. Do written, up-to-date board policies guide the operation of the school? Explain.
7. Are there written staff contracts that include salaries, benefits and working conditions?
8. Is the system used to evaluate teachers and administrators effective?
 - a) Does the system facilitate student growth and development?
 - b) Does it foster improved staff performance?
 - c) Does it allow for increased collaboration between staff and school management?
9. How would you assess the current professional development offerings?
 - a. Do they allow for collaborative planning for professional growth?
 - b. Do they focus on teaching and learning?
 - c. Do they involve orientation of new staff members?
10. Does the school head or principal authority have the autonomy to be the educational leader of the school?

School Head

Meeting with the school head is necessary to understand the relationships with the board, management and faculty as well as to ascertain the head's degree of autonomy. It also provides an opportunity to ascertain the school's commitment to professional growth.

Ask questions such as:

1. How well do you feel the school is staffed? Are there sufficient and qualified administrators, teachers and support staff to provide the services needed to be an effective school? Explain.
2. How do you determine the effectiveness of your relationship with the school staff?
3. What opportunities are provided to staff to engage in discussions on professional matters such as:

- a) creating a positive school climate and culture?
 - b) improving the teaching and learning process?
 - c) designing professional development opportunities for staff?
 - d) revising policies and procedures as needed?
4. How would you assess the staff's implementation of professional duties and responsibilities regarding the:
 - a) school's philosophy and objectives?
 - b) applicable statutes, government regulations and laws?
 - c) adequate accommodation of individual student's needs?
 - d) ongoing review of effective teaching and learning practices?
 5. How is the staff involved in the staff in shaping or updating board policies? Please explain.
 6. Are there written staff contracts that include salaries, benefits and working
 7. conditions? How involved is the head in developing these contracts?
 8. How effective is the system used to evaluate teachers and administrators?
 - a) Does the system facilitate student growth and development?
 - b) Does it foster improved staff performance?
 - c) Does it allow for increased collaboration?
 9. How would you assess the current professional development program?
 - a) Does it allow for collaborative planning for professional growth?
 - b) Does it focus on teaching and learning?
 - c) Does it involve orientation of new staff members?
 - d) How satisfied is the staff with the program?

Management

Meeting with management is necessary to understand the extent to which the school meets the standards on Staff. Ask questions such as the following:

1. Does the school have a sufficient number of qualified teachers and support staff to provide meaningful learning experiences?
2. Does the head of school ensure a cooperative working relationship with all staff and use their abilities effectively?
3. Does the principal have the autonomy necessary to be the leader of the school?
4. What opportunities are provided to the staff to engage them in professional discussions such as:
 - a) creating a positive school climate and culture?
 - b) improving the teaching and learning process?
 - c) designing professional development opportunities for staff?
 - d) revising policies as needed?
5. What procedures do you use to assess the staff in professionally carrying out their duties and responsibilities and do they take into consideration the following:
 - a) school's philosophy and objectives?
 - b) applicable statutes, government regulations and laws?
 - c) adequately meeting individual student's need?
 - d) ongoing review of effective teaching and learning practices?
6. Are personnel policies available to all staff? How are they distributed?

7. Does the school have clear policies and procedures regarding salaries, benefits and working conditions?
8. How effective is the staff appraisal system? Please elaborate.
 - a) Does it facilitate individual student growth and development?
 - b) Does it foster improved staff performance?
 - c) Does it allow for increased collaboration among teachers and management?
10. How would you assess the current professional development program?
 - a) Does it allow for collaborative planning for professional growth?
 - b) Does it focus on teaching and learning?
 - c) Does it involve orientation of new staff members?
 - d) How satisfied is the staff with the program?
11. Are department heads/lead teachers appropriately involved in decision-making? What provisions are made for management to be involved?

Support Staff

The point of view of support staff is important in ascertaining the degree to which the standards on Staff are met. Feel free to convene representatives from support groups:

1. Are personnel policies available to staff? How are they distributed?
2. What measure does the school head use to ensure a cooperative working relationship with all staff?
3. Does the principal have the autonomy to be the head of the school?
4. What opportunities does the head provide to engage the support staff in discussions such as:
 - a) creating a positive school climate and culture?
 - b) revising policies as needed?
 - c) involving staff in the decision-making process?
5. Does the school have clear policies and procedures regarding salaries, benefits and working conditions for the support staff?

Parents

The point of view of parents is important to understand the extent to which the school meets the standards on Staff. Ask questions such as the following:

1. Does the school head ensure that there is a co-operative working relationship with all parents?
2. Is the staff attentive to the individual differences of students?
3. Does the staff foster a positive school climate which is conducive to learning?
4. Does the staff appear to be committed to the school's philosophy and objectives?
5. Are the staff sufficiently responsive to your concerns about your child(ren's) education and learning?

Students

The point of view of students is important to understand the extent to which the school meets the standards on Staff. Ask questions such as the following when you meet with them:

1. Does the staff establish a positive climate which is conducive to learning?
2. Is the staff attentive to your individual differences in the classroom?
3. Does there appear to be a co-operative working relationship among and between staff?
4. Are there sufficient numbers of staff to carry out the school's programs, services and activities?
5. Is the staff accessible to you for conferences, extra help and the like?

Classroom Visits

One of the team's responsibilities is to visit all classroom teachers at least once. When you visit classrooms, your task will be to gain a sense of such things as the following;

- the extent to which the curriculum reflects the school's philosophy
- patterns of instruction in the school, - whether there is a predominant teaching style, such as lecturing, or whether a variety of styles is used.
- the pace of the day – whether the teachers and students are comfortable with the time allotted to complete their assigned tasks.
- The degree of rigor of instruction, - whether all or only some of the students in the classes are challenged.
- The teacher's attentiveness to the individual differences of students.
- The climate of the class – whether there is appropriate adherence to rules and mutual respect, and whether the environment is inviting and comfortable.
- The adequacy of classroom furniture, space and other resources to support the curriculum.
- The level of integration of technology in classroom instruction.

Summarize your findings and give them to the chair(s) of appropriate standards committees such as Student Services, Governance and Management, Curriculum and Resources.

Evaluation of School Policies and Procedures

The Seventh Edition of the NEASC/CIS Guide to School Evaluation and Accreditation emphasizes specific policies and procedures in its standards and indicators. As the team member responsible for Staff, you will review and critique the written policies and procedures that relate to this section, including:

1. Non-discrimination
2. Professional development
3. Evaluation and accountability of staff
4. Governing body/staff relations
5. Recruitment, appointment, promotion and retirement
6. Working conditions, workloads and ethical treatment
7. Staff morale

Comments on specific policies and procedures should be inserted in your section on Observations.

Writing the Staff Report

Your report on Staff should contain three sections: (1) Observations, (2) Commendations and (3) Recommendations.

Observations

Your observations will be a narrative describing the most important issues you have noted in the Staff section. To allow readers to understand the commendations and recommendations which you will soon prepare, you must first ensure that there is a thorough list of observations of the school at the time of the evaluation. As part of its self-study, the school has prepared such a description of its staff. Feel free to borrow wording that you are sure is accurate.

After meeting with individuals and groups and reviewing the school's self-study material, you will be ready to sort your ideas. First, look at the school's description and the various processes noted. Are any particularly effective? If so, make note of them. Do any create problems or not work well? Make a note of them also.

In addition, recall your conversations with the groups and individuals. What major areas of strength were noted? What weaknesses? Write these down. Finally, take another look at the school's self-study material on Staff. What areas did the school identify as warranting commendations and recommendations? Note the quality of school policies as well as those which do not exist. (Please see **Evaluation of School Policies and Procedures** on the previous page.)

With all of this information in front of you, identify the school's major areas of strength. Write a paragraph(s) explaining why each of these is commendable or describe how each is working especially well. Then examine your notes to identify major problems or deficiencies. Write (an)other paragraph(s) explaining why something is not effective and describe resultant problems.

Commendations

Now you are ready to write specific commendations. Look at the paragraph(s) in Observations that discuss the school's strength. Every strength that you've singled out in Observations should be written as a commendation.

Are there other strengths you would like to note? Commend those aspects that indicate strong preparation, commitment, imagination, effort and/or achievement in the area of Staff. Does the commendation apply to other areas as well? Remember that no school ever suffered from too much praise.

Recommendations

Finally, you are now ready to write specific recommendations which should come from two sources, a standard which is not fully met or a discrepancy between what the school described in its self-study and what the visiting team observed during the evaluation. The school must share the disposition of all recommendations in the visiting team report with the accrediting agencies in subsequent progress reports. You must follow the same procedure as you did in identifying commendations. For every problem or limitation which you noted under Observations, prepare a clear, concise, understandable recommendation.

Each recommendation must begin with a verb for purpose of consistency. Clarify whether a recommendation applies to only one or several area(s) of the school.

Staff

Rating The Standards

You are responsible for recommending to the visiting team a rating: “Meets (M), Exceeds (E) or Does Not Meet (D)” on the school’s adherence to the standards on Staff.

Each standard which is rated “Exceeds” or “Does Not Meet” must be accompanied by a brief explanation.

The team chair will give you the form on which these ratings will be recorded.

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Our Thanks

We’re sure you’ll find the evaluation experience intense and often tiring, but we hope that you’ll also find it enjoyable and rewarding.

We are certain that your contributions will improve the school immensely. Thank you very much for your help.

NEASC Glossary for Guides for Evaluators

The following acronyms or terms may have been used in self-study materials. The glossary will help the reader understand their context in this school.

ACT – derives its name from the independent, nonprofit organization which creates and administers the test. American College Testing provides college entrance examinations which seek to predict secondary school students' success in colleges and universities. The three-hour, standardized test may play an important part in students' acceptance into college. ACT consists of several sections: personal interest inventory, a course and grade information questionnaire, a student profile and a series of tests on the standard high school curriculum to include an English test, reading, mathematics and science reasoning. The English test is divided into two parts: Usage and Mechanics, and Rhetorical Skills. ACT is located in Iowa City, Iowa.

Alternative assessment is any form of measuring what students know or are able to do other than traditional standardized tests. Alternative forms of assessment include portfolios, performance-based assessments and other means of testing students.

AP – the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) in Princeton, NJ, USA sponsors Advanced Placement Programs. The Board provides syllabi for students who wish to study college-level courses while in high school. Students then take related CEEB examinations in the spring of the year. Students may earn appropriate credit and placement in college on the basis of satisfactory performance in the examinations. Scores are awarded on a scale from 1-5, from highest to lowest grade.

Baccalauréat, French – The French national secondary leaving exam for French nationals. Students who pass three-hour exams are given automatic entrance into national universities. There are three series for academic, university bound students, each with a different emphasis. The “S” series emphasizes math and science; “ES” emphasizes economics, history and social sciences and “L” stresses literature, philosophy and languages. Students take a prescribed course to prepare for one of the series with few electives, except in languages. Two foreign languages are required in each series. Additional series emphasize pre-vocational courses and technology.

Betriebsrat is the group which represents the professional staff in negotiating specific school issues. (Germany)

CAS – Creativity, Action, Service – is a fundamental part of the IB program. (Please see below.) It helps students to highlight the importance of extracurricular activities as a balance to the school's academic life. Diploma candidates must contribute at least 150 hours of community service, artistic, and physical activities over a two-year period.

DALF is the advanced level of the DELF. (Please see DELF below.)

DELFL – Diplôme des Etudes de la Langue Française is the national French language competency exam for foreigners, similar to the TOEFL exam.

Diploma Programme, provided by IBO, is considered to be a rigorous pre-university course of studies leading to examinations that meet the needs of highly motivated secondary school students between the ages of 16-19. The program allows its graduates to fulfill requirements of various national educational systems. The program is available in English, French and Spanish.

Edexcel was formed by the merger of BTEC, the leading provider of vocational tests and the University of London Examinations and Assessment Council (ULEAC), one of the major GCSE and GCE examining bodies. The merger provides vocational and academic examinations to help promote employability and personal development. The Edexcel International operates in over 100 countries worldwide through more than 5700 centers.

ELMLE - European League of Middle Level Education

External audit – a complete accounting of the school’s financial status conducted by an independent auditing firm.

GNVQ – General National Vocational Qualification (UK)

Governing body is the duly constituted group which has the ultimate authority to make decisions on behalf of the school. It may be called the school board, school council, School committee or the like.

Hadith is the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad which were codified in the Middle Ages to support and expand Islamic law.

Head of school is the person who leads and supervises the daily operations of the school and ensures that the policies of the governing body are implemented. The position may also be called director, principal, superintendent or the like.

Head of subject is usually a teacher who also has a supervisory of middle management role in a subject or group of subjects.

HR - Human Resources

IB – International Baccalaureate

IB Diploma – is awarded upon successful examination results in six subjects, three at the higher level and three at subsidiary level. The examinations at higher level are of the same general standard as Advanced Placement examinations of the CEEB in the United States or the Advanced Level General Certificate of Education examinations in the UK. The six subjects must include:

1. Language A - English, the language of instruction;

2. Language B – English, French, German, Spanish;
3. Study of Man – Contemporary History, Economics, Psychology;
4. Experimental Science – Biology, Chemistry, Physics;
5. Mathematics;
6. Art, Music, Computer Studies, or a further subject from items 2, 3, 4, or 5 above.

IBO – International Baccalaureate Organization is a nonprofit educational foundation based in Switzerland which offers the International Baccalaureate, a recognized pre-university course which leads to examinations for separate subject certificates or the IB Diploma for students in the final two years of secondary school. All of the main disciplines are included, languages, social studies, experimental sciences, mathematics, and optional subjects which means that the program can be built on any sound curriculum. It also sponsors the **MYP** and the **PYP** Programs. (Please see below.)

IBO Grading Scale - Faculty in grades 6-12 follow the assessment guidelines laid down by the IBO Middle Years Program. The IBO 1-7 grading scale is utilized in the middle school.

In giving grades for overall achievement, teachers use the following criteria as a guide by balancing a pupil's strengths and weaknesses and assigning the grade that best describes the student's achievement.

Grade 7 is a mark of distinction. This grade is reserved for students who consistently produce excellent written work handed in on time. Grade 7 students regularly make an outstanding contribution to class work. This grade is rarely awarded.

Grade 6 is a mark of superiority. Grade 6 students show initiative and work well with others. Written assignments are consistently completed with care and accuracy and are handed in on time. Work shows originality, understanding and insight. Students regularly make a valuable contribution to class work.

Grade 5 represents above average accomplishment. While it represents less achievement than a grade 6, the same qualities are frequently evident. Very able students who do not fulfill their full potential may warrant this grade, as may less able students who apply themselves fully and effectively. Grade 5 students cooperate well in groups and hand in work on time.

Grade 4 represents satisfactory achievement. Assigned work is done in an acceptable fashion. Students display reasonable understanding of the course work and their written work shows some understanding if not originality. They work cooperatively and complete work on time.

Grade 3 indicates that the student is either finding the course work very difficult, producing work that does not show a reasonable level of understanding, or is not fulfilling his/her potential. The teacher will make the reason for the allocation of this grade clear in a written narrative. Grade 3 students rarely show initiative although they do not obstruct the progress of others. A parent teacher conference should take place.

Grade 2 indicates progress that is short of a passing grade. It may reflect a lack of effort and failure to complete assignments properly or a high level of difficulty for the student. A parent teacher conference should take place.

Grade 1 is awarded when performance is well below that required to pass. Work is superficial or irrelevant and assignments have not been handed in (see INC grade). A parent teacher conference should take place.

L Grade indicates that the student is presently studying English as a second language at elementary or intermediate level. Good effort and progress are being made, but assignments and evaluation may have been modified. When the student's English proficiency enables them to work at grade level, the L grade is no longer used.

NG (No grade given) is used when a student has not been in the class long enough for a grade to be awarded.

INC (Incomplete) Assignments have not all been completed. This grade will be changed to "1" unless outstanding assignments are handed in within two weeks.

Each department determines how they use the subject specific criteria to assess student work and meet the required aims and objectives. For each course, each trimester, students receive a 1-7 grade that is reported home along with a narrative comment that includes overarching attitudes to learning indicators and subject specific measurements. At the end of each year, the three trimester grades are averaged to determine the final grade. Around half-term for each trimester, the school schedules a parent-teacher conference day in order to give a formative assessment of students achievements for the trimester.

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

IEP – Individualized Educational Plan is a carefully crafted design of courses to meet the specific needs of one student, based on ability, interest and relative maturity.

IGCSE – International General Certificate of Education is a program sponsored by the University of Cambridge in the UK that provides the syllabi outlining required material to be covered and sets the examinations on which students are assessed at the end of grade 10. The IGCSE curriculum is divided into five subject groups: Languages; Humanities and Social Sciences; Sciences; Mathematics, and Creative, Technical and Vocational. Examinations are a series of tests and are not limited to conventional written papers.

INSET – in-service training

International A levels – are based on the "A" level examinations required to qualify for most British universities. "A" level examinations are usually taken two years after the IGCSE examinations. The extensive range of "A" level syllabi includes provision of many school subjects. Some subjects such as geography and history are tailored for candidates in specific parts of the world. In addition, a wide range of languages is offered.

ISEE – The Independent School Entrance Exam, developed for the Educational Testing Bureau in the United States, has become the test of choice for many independent schools. These scores have been accepted as an alternative entrance exam to the **SSAT**. (Please see below.) It consists of four multiple choice sections and an essay section.

ITBS – The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills is a series of general achievement tests for grades three through eight. Along with others, such as the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills and the Stanford Achievement Test Series, they are designed to measure how well a student has learned the basic knowledge and skills taught in U.S. elementary and middle schools, in such areas as reading and mathematics.

Koran– the sacred text of Islam, considered by Moslems to contain the revelations of God to Mohammed. (See also Qur’an)

LMC – Library Media Center

Management Team is the group whose main role is to supervise school operations.

MUN – Model United Nations is a non-profit educational organization which provides a realistic simulation of the United Nations. Students attend annual international conferences at which they represent countries in devising mock solutions to international problems.

MYP (Middle Years Programme) is sponsored by the IBO for students from ages 11 to 16. It is represented as a complete and coherent program that provides a framework of academic challenge and life skills appropriate to this stage of adolescence. The program covers grades from 6 to 10.

NCTM - National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

NMSQT – (Please see PSAT)

PE - Physical Education

Performance-based Assessment requires students to perform hands-on tasks, such as writing an essay or conducting a science experiment. Such assessments are becoming increasingly common as alternatives to multiple-choice, machine-scored tests. Also known as authentic assessment.

Philosophy and Objectives includes all similar school terms such as mission, charter, vision and the like.

Portfolio is a systematic and organized collection of a student’s work throughout a course or class year. It measures a student’s knowledge and skills and often includes some form of self-reflection

Professional development is a school program designed to strengthen the educational background of the board, management and staff, often called in-service training.

Project Zero is a research institute, based at Harvard University, which examines the interplay of teaching, learning and understanding.

PSAT – Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test is designed to help students practice for the SAT1. (Please see below.) It is sponsored by the College Entrance Examination Board in Princeton, New Jersey. It may also be called the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT) because students who score well are eligible for scholarships awarded by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. The test is virtually the same as the SAT1 but with fewer sections. The test does have a writing skills section not found in the SAT1. Colleges do not consider PSAT scores for admissions.

PYP (Primary Years Programme), sponsored by the IBO, is an international curriculum designed for children between the ages of 3-12 years. The program attempts to focus on the total growth of the developing child, affecting hearts as well as minds and addressing social, physical, emotional, and cultural needs in addition to academic welfare. The PYP draws from a range of national systems with a wealth of knowledge and experience from international schools.

Qur'an is the sacred text of Islam, considered by Moslems to contain the revelations of God to Mohammed (Please see Koran.)

PSAT – Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test is designed to help students practice for the SAT1. (Please see below.) It is sponsored by the College Entrance Examination Board in Princeton, New Jersey. It may also be called the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT) since students who score well are eligible for scholarships awarded by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. The test is virtually the same as the SAT1 but with fewer sections. The test does have a writing skills section not found in the SAT1. Colleges do not consider PSAT scores for admissions.

School community is the group of stakeholders in the school: governing body, managers, staff, students and parents.

School division refers to horizontal units in the school such as primary division, elementary division and the like.

SIRS – Social Issues Research Service – an electronic library resource

Special needs refer to student characteristics which require special assistance from the professional staff. These students may have learning difficulties and/or exceptionally high abilities or talents.

Staff includes all personnel with management, teaching or support roles.

TESOL – Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

TOEFL – Test of English as a Foreign Language

TOK – Theory of Knowledge – IB candidates must take this interdisciplinary course which explores the relationships among academic courses and encourages critical reflection and analysis.

UCLES - University of Cambridge (UK) Local Examinations Syndicate

Units of inquiry are six themes organized by PYP for teaching students of ages 3-12 through a multidisciplinary approach.