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GUIDE FOR EVALUATORS

Resources

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wishes to thank you for joining this 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 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 they don't conflict with the team schedule.

Individual assignments are those for which you are responsible, such as evaluating academic subjects and the section on Resources. In a sense, you'll become the team's expert on these aspects 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'll 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. We've found that every hour you spend preparing beforehand will be worth many hours during the evaluation.

- A. Study the following materials which have been sent by the school:
 1. Community, School, Student Profiles
 2. Opinion Surveys
 3. School's Philosophy and Objectives

- B. Review the entire self-study, examining thoroughly the documents that relate to your individual assignments.

- C. Take notes on the standards and indicators on Resources 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 Resources

School resources include a diverse range of services, facilities, equipment, and personnel that support the school program, provide for the comfort and safety of the community, and contribute to student learning. Some resources are best when they are invisible: a cleaning program that doesn't disrupt school programs or a transportation system that runs on time. A well-run food service lifts morale; a poor one can be a drag on the community. Other resources, such as security equipment and evacuation plans, are in place for eventualities that no one wishes to happen.

Schools are increasingly dependent on communication technology as an essential tool to tie the school together. Library media are at the heart of the academic program. School buildings and grounds create a positive environment for learning and assure comfort, efficiency of movement, favorable noise levels, adequacy of specialized facilities, and handicapped access.

All areas in the standards for Resources contribute to a successful school and to a safe and positive experience for students. Because resources are often taken for granted, visitors with an outside perspective may more easily identify weaknesses and recommend ways to improve facilities, equipment and services.

In order to complete your assignment, you will read self-study materials, observe in 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 school's Resources will be based on the standards which are printed below in bold letters followed by their related indicators:

1. The school shall provide or arrange for such services as are required in support of its program offerings, and shall ensure that food, security, transportation, cleaning, and other services meet acceptable standards of safety and comfort.

- 1a. The dining room is large, clean and bright enough to provide a comfortable, attractive setting.
- 1b. The kitchen is well designed and equipped; it is clean, bright and safe.
- 1c. Food served at the school is nutritious, safe and appetizing.
- 1d. Menus for school meals are well planned in accordance with sound dietary standards, and menus are readily available for inspection.
- 1e. Adequate toilet and washing facilities are provided for food service personnel.
- 1f. Adequate supervision is provided for dining facilities.
- 1g. Suitable arrangements are made to cover threats to security.
- 1h. Vehicles used in student transportation are modern, clean, well maintained, properly licensed and insured.

- 1i. Adequate supervision is provided on all school trips, including daily trips to and from school.
- 1j. School trips are planned with due consideration for student comfort, welfare and safety.
- 1k. There are carefully developed procedures and effective supervision of pupils in bus-loading areas and of all other students in transit.
- 1l. School premises are kept in an acceptably clean state at all times of the school day.

2. Personnel employed to provide student services should be adequate in number, have appropriate qualifications, and receive sufficient training to perform their functions effectively.

- 2a. Staff function effectively in accordance with their assigned duties and job descriptions.
- 2b. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced to carry out their duties.
- 2c. Staff is appropriately attired, courteous and well trained.
- 2d. Staff is well supervised.
- 2e. The functions of all staff are carried out with a minimum of disruption to the school as a whole.
- 2f. Staffs who prepare and serve meals undergo regular medical examinations to ensure that they are free from communicable diseases.

3. The school shall meet safety requirements of the local authorities and of the accrediting association(s).

- 3a. The school shall have satisfactory procedures for evacuating the school buildings and for summoning assistance in case of fire or other emergencies.
- 3b. Parents and teachers understand the procedures for emergency evacuations.
- 3c. The school premises shall be maintained in a safe and healthy condition. An adequate number of fire extinguishers and other safety devices shall be available, including a satisfactory fire alarm system.
- 3d. Buildings and facilities used to provide instruction and services meet the health and safety codes of local government authorities and the accrediting association(s).
- 3e. The school meets all safety requirements of the local government authority responsible for health and safety in schools.
- 3f. Facilities for preparing and serving meals meet appropriate standards of safety and cleanliness.
- 3g. Certificates of inspection and regulations required by law are posted in prominent places as appropriate.

4. Written rules and policies governing access to and use of school resources shall be available to the school community.

- 4a. The governing body has established rules and policies governing access to and use of school resources.
- 4b. The above-mentioned policies are in written form and available to students, parents, and student services personnel.

5. The school grounds, buildings, technical installations, basic furnishings, and supporting equipment shall be adequate for effective support of the total school program.

- 5a. Governing body policies contain references to the adequacy, maintenance and improvement of school facilities.
- 5b. There are sufficient and appropriate instructional spaces to support properly the instructional program of the school:
 - Classrooms
 - Laboratories
 - Studios
 - Physical education and sports facilities
 - Other
- 5c. All instructional spaces are appropriately furnished and equipped.
- 5d. Instructional and service areas that involve noisy activities are isolated from quieter areas.
- 5e. Adequate storage areas are readily accessible for individual and general use.
- 5a. The school site provides for present and future flexibility as the student body, educational program and/or technology changes.
- 5b. Provisions are made for accommodating the handicapped.

- 5c. The design of the building(s) facilitates the efficient movement of students.
- 5d. The physical plant provides for an appropriate atmosphere for learning.
- 5e. The administrative offices are well located, and provide appropriate spaces, both private and for the general public, for the total administrative function.
- 5f. Heating and cooling systems of the buildings meet code requirements, and are regularly cleaned and inspected for operating efficiency and safety.
- 5g. Permanent outdoor equipment is provided as needed, and is attractive and well maintained.

6. The school's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) shall appropriately support the school's operations.

- 6a. ICT provision is sufficient to support the curriculum.
- 6b. ICT provision is sufficient to support the management functions of the school.
- 6c. Computers are adequate in number and location to permit use by individuals and groups.
- 6d. There is adequate maintenance and up grading of all ICT hardware and software.
- 6e. The school is equipped for networking and Internet access.

7. The library/media center shall be conveniently accessible, be of adequate size, and have sufficient staff and resources to meet the educational needs of students and staff.

- 7a. The location, space, lighting, furnishings and organization of the library/media center make it an attractive and effective facility for students and staff.
- 7b. Materials and equipment for the library/media center are selected on the basis of their contribution to school programs.
- 7c. The collection of books, periodicals, reference materials and equipment, including information technology, is adequate in quantity and quality to meet the goals of the educational program and the particular needs of an international school.
- 7d. Materials are catalogued and well maintained.
- 7e. The library collection includes books and periodicals to enhance the professional growth of staff.
- 7f. Responsibilities for library/media center management and related teaching are clearly designated.
- 7g. Library/media center staff has appropriate training.
- 7h. The library/media staff is appropriate in size to encourage staff and student use of the facility and its resources

8. The library/media staff shall provide an ongoing program of instruction in effective use of resource materials and equipment, and shall apply appropriate policies for library use and the means of assessing effectiveness.

- 8a. Teachers and students are given orientation in the usage of materials and equipment in the library/media center.
- 8b. The librarian is involved in curriculum review and development.
- 8c. The school curriculum includes a sequence of lessons in library use and research skills.
- 8d. Library policies include a selection policy and policy for challenged materials.
- 8e. Library guidelines promote faculty input as part of the selection process.
- 8f. Policies and rules for library/media center use are clearly posted and enforced.
- 8g. There are mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of library services.
- 8h. Logs and library records document the amount and nature of library use.

9. The facilities shall be maintained and operated in a manner that assures the safety and comfort of students and staff.

- 9a. The electrical and any other power installations are adequate, and are regularly inspected and checked for operating efficiency and for safety.
- 9b. Water and the sanitation systems are hygienic, well planned and maintained.
- 9c. Buildings are of durable, fire-resistant material.
- 9d. Fire-protection materials and equipment throughout the buildings, and especially in the boiler room, kitchens, and science laboratories, are adequate.
- 9e. There is an adequate and accessible hydrant water supply for fire fighting in case of need.
- 9f. Effective fire-alarm systems are installed, and are regularly tested to ensure they are in working order and audible throughout the premises.

- 9g. Suitable emergency facilities and escape arrangements exist, and are maintained in working order.
- 9h. Serious safety problems are reported to the Head of School with recommendations for action.
- 9i. The school has a Health and Safety Committee, which carries out an effective monitoring role.
- 9j. The school has an effective system for the maintenance and repair of buildings, grounds and equipment.

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 school tour to acquaint them with the facilities and grounds. During that time you should pay particular attention to areas related to the section on Resources 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 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 Resources 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 perceptions with team members may help you identify areas for further investigation. Keep in mind that school improvement is the ultimate goal of the evaluation.

Meetings 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 wait 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 a general question which 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.
- Near the end of the meeting, ask if anyone has something to add 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 Resources

The self-study committee developed a sense of how well the school meets NEASC's standards on Resources. The committee should be able to provide the following responses:

1. Have the resources changed in any significant ways since the self-study on Resources was last approved? Please explain.
2. What are the major issues regarding resources that emerged in the self-study?
3. How would you prioritize the areas needing attention? Are there plans for changes in any area?
4. Are the facilities, materials, and number of support staff adequate for the program of the school?
5. What are the primary security concerns of the school? What plans are in place to cope with an emergency?
6. Which services are contracted and which are directly run by the school?
7. Is there a comprehensive technology plan for the school? How was it developed? Who had input into the plan? Who made the final decisions?
8. What is the budget for Information and Communication Technology (ICT)? What plans are pending for further development of academic and administrative technology resources?
9. In what ways does the Library/Media Center (LMC) serve the overall program of the school? How could it do more?
10. How is the effectiveness of the LMC assessed? When was the most recent assessment? By whom? What were the conclusions?
11. Is there a written policy governing access to the facilities that gives priority to the program needs of the school?

Parents

Meet with parents so that you can learn their perception of the resources and support services at the school. Since these individuals may not have specific knowledge of the

findings of the self-study, ask questions such as the following:

1. How aware and how comfortable are you with the security arrangements at the school?
2. Do you have suggestions to improve the food service?
3. When you are at the school, do you find support staff courteous and competent?
4. What are the procedures for emergency evacuation of the school? What is the communication plan in the event of an emergency?
5. What suggestions would you make to improve the physical facilities of the school? What do you consider the highest priorities?
6. Does the school have sufficient ICT?
7. Are students expected to have access to computers at home? Is there support for students who don't have home computers or who own equipment that is incompatible with school equipment?
8. Does the school have an acceptable use policy for its computers?
9. Does the LMC provide adequate resources for students to complete their work and to prepare them for expectations they will encounter when they graduate or transfer?

Students

It is important to meet with students so that you can get their perceptions of the school resources. As those for whom services are intended, they can speak to the effectiveness of certain school policies, plans, and practices. In general, you should plan to meet with secondary and middle school students. Meet with elementary students in a manner that you and the school agree is comfortable and appropriate for them. It is unlikely that students will have specific knowledge of the findings of the self-study. Ask questions such as the following:

1. What are strengths and limitations of the food service? What improvements would you recommend?
2. Are you comfortable that the school facilities are clean and well maintained? Are necessary repairs made quickly?
3. Is the building temperature and air circulation comfortable throughout the year?
4. When was the last fire drill? How often are drills conducted? Where do you assemble in the event of an evacuation?
5. What programs would benefit from improved facilities? What programs suffer from inadequate facilities at the present time?
6. What use do you make of ICT? How accessible is equipment at school?
7. Do your teachers incorporate ICT in their classes? In homework assignments?
8. How often do you use the LMC and for what purpose? Do you have assignments that require use of the LMC? Are the resources adequate?
9. What instruction have you received in the use of the LMC? From whom?
10. Are you comfortable using the LMC? Do you have suggestions to make it more useful to you?

Management

Meetings with persons responsible for providing and overseeing school resources are necessary. They know the specifics of school operations that will determine if standards

are met. If library and technology personnel are not included on the self-study committee on Resources, be sure that they are available in this group and ask the related questions here. Resources is a wide-ranging area; ask questions such as:

1. What provisions are in place to assure the security of students at the school and on school sponsored trips?
2. Who is responsible for overseeing support services? How are support staff supervised?
3. Who is responsible for hiring support staff? What background checks are conducted? What medical exams are required? How are new staff oriented and trained?
4. Where are emergency plans published/posted? When were they last updated? How often are they reviewed with staff, students, and families?
5. In the event of an evacuation, how are all students accounted for?
6. What priorities for facility improvement or expansion have been identified? Is there a timetable for work to begin? Are funds available?
7. What is the policy on reporting safety problems? Who is notified? How is response assured?
8. Who is responsible for testing and maintaining the fire prevention systems? What is the schedule for checking them?
9. When and by whom was the last comprehensive safety review conducted? What issues did the last review identify? Have they all been addressed?
10. What is the procedure for routine repair and maintenance requests? Is the response adequate? How long does it usually take for requested maintenance to be completed?

Teachers

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

1. How do you arrange transportation if you wish to take students off campus? What provisions for supervision are required on off-campus trips?
2. Do you find the support staff courteous and competent?
3. What is the procedure for emergency evacuation of the building? What is your responsibility in the event of an evacuation? How are all students accounted for?
4. What limitations are there in the school facilities that affect your program? What changes/improvements would you like to see?
5. What obstacles are there to maintaining a comfortable and focused learning environment for students? Is maintenance, cleaning, and repair work done in a manner that does not disrupt your programs?
6. Does the school have adequate resources devoted to ICT?
7. What voice do you have in planning the integration of ICT in your teaching? How do you use the LMC to support your teaching?
8. Does the collection of books, materials, and equipment in the LMC meet the needs of your program? What input do you have in adding resources to the LMC?

9. What suggestions do you have to make the LMC a more effective resource for you and your students?
10. Whom do you notify if you identify a safety problem? Are safety problems addressed/corrected promptly?

Observe the School

Information about the effectiveness of school resources may be gained from observations of all aspects of school operations. In addition to the initial tour of the school, a few suggestions for observation are:

1. Observe bus loading and student pick-up procedures at dismissal time.
2. As you move about the school, observe the fire extinguishers, exit signs, obstructions in hallways, obvious needs for maintenance, repair or the like. Inquire about anything that strikes you as out of the ordinary. Is management aware of the situation? Does anything need to be done? If so, what is the plan and timetable?
3. Where is ICT available to students? How much student use do you observe?
4. Observe the LMC at different times of day. Are students present? Is there adequate space? What are students doing in the LMC? How does staff interact with the students? Is there sufficient supervision?
5. Ask to see certificates of compliance with health and safety codes.

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, e.g. 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, i.e. 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 Support Services, Curriculum and Staff.

Evaluation of School Policies and Procedures

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

1. procedures for evacuating the buildings and for summoning assistance for emergencies.
2. compliance with relevant local government regulations, including health and safety codes.
3. posting of certificates of inspection and regulations required by law.
4. written policies governing access to and use of school resources.
5. library policies on selection and policies for challenged materials.
6. logs and library records documenting the amount and nature of library use.

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

Writing the Resources Report

Your report on Resources 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 Resources 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 a description of its resources. Feel free to borrow any of the school's description that you're sure is accurate.

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

In addition, recall your conversations with 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 Resources. What areas did the school self-study 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 which discuss the school’s strengths. Every asset that you’ve singled out here should be written as a commendation. Does the commendation apply to other areas as well?

Are there other qualities you would like to note? Commend those aspects which indicate strong preparation, commitment, imagination, effort, and/or achievement in the area of Resources. 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.

Resources

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 Resources.

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 that 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. This 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

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.