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NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

THE HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

*A Handbook for members of Visiting Teams
to be used in conjunction with
The Main Guide to School Evaluation and Accreditation
'Journey to Excellence in International Education', 8th Edition
and
Reporting Booklet Part One*

*Compatible with the 8th Edition
Version 8.2 September 2014*

INTRODUCTION TO HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

The Handbook for Evaluators has been revised to accompany the Eight Edition of the CIS/NEASC School Evaluation and Accreditation process entitled '**Journey to Excellence in International Education**'.

Among the most noteworthy changes in the Eighth Edition is the reduction of bulk and repetition and a stronger emphasis on self-reflection. Despite the fact that the Eighth Edition has fewer standards and indicators it will have a greater impact within schools. This edition incorporates more focused statements on internationalism and inter-culturalism, a greater emphasis on improving student learning and an opportunity for the school community to identify their next steps towards achieving continuous improvement.

Among the most noteworthy changes is the restructuring of accreditation standards. The number of standard sections is unchanged from the Seventh Edition but the new section titles are as follows

- A – School Guiding Statements
- B – Teaching and Learning
- C – Governance and Leadership
- D – Faculty and Support Staff
- E – Access to Teaching and Learning
- F – School Cultures and Partnerships for Learning
- G – Operational Systems

Every accredited school uses the standards and indicators included in this handbook and schools are encouraged to suggest additional indicators to demonstrate their effort to meet the respective standards. Visiting team members should consider these additional indicators as they evaluate the school. In addition each of the standards has an appendix found in the Self-Study Booklet containing non-mandatory materials which can be useful to both the self-study committee and to the team visitor.

Each Handbook for Evaluators will assist team members in carrying out their responsibilities to review the school's profile, analysis of opinion surveys and self-study, observe the school in progress, meet with members of the school community, prepare portions of the visiting team report, and join in recommending the school's accreditation status. Usually, team members will be assigned one or more sections. Team members assigned to the section on Teaching and Learning will be responsible for preparing a report on each division at the School and additional team members will be responsible for preparing the vertical reports.

The handbook also emphasizes an interactive approach between the self-study committee and the visiting team. The self-study committee prepares the report using the Reporting Booklet. The visiting team in turn responds to the report from the self-study committee adds its comments directly onto the Reporting Booklet for each of the respective sections.

We hope that this handbook will assist the members of the visiting team in conducting a successful team visit. We want to underscore the importance of reviewing the information in this handbook, the self-study and all supporting materials for your assigned area as this advanced

work will be invaluable to you once you arrive at the school. Our sincere best wishes for a successful visit.

Jane Larsson
Executive Director
Council of International Schools

Cameron Staples
Executive Director and CEO
New England Association of Schools and Colleges

CIS and NEASC gratefully acknowledge the work of the Members of the Committee for the 2011 Handbook for Evaluators:

Jacqui Diggs
Dorothy Galo
Meredith Ghattas
Kenneth Imperato
Cornelia A. Kelley
John Kosko
Christine L. McGrath
Linda Turner
Pete Woodward

PART ONE

HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

The School Profile and Analysis of Opinion Results

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wishes to thank you for joining this Visiting Team in an evaluation of an international school. The accreditation program is a three-step process:

- A Self-Study conducted by the school requesting accreditation.
- An evaluation by a Visiting Team (VT) of experienced educators.
- A follow-up program in which the school addresses recommendations by CIS/NEASC Visiting Team members.

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. Your task is to participate with other team members in the activities and deliberations that will result in a team recommendation to the accrediting agency on that matter.

Your task as an evaluator will be to complete team assignments and individual assignment(s). Team assignments are those that you'll share with others, such as attendance at team meetings, assisting team members in completing group tasks, and participating in joint interviews and other meetings with school personnel. 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 responding to the school's self-assessment in one or more of the Reporting Booklets that comprise the Self-Study. 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 documents, and contributing to team 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. The school profile that was completed in Part One of the Self-Study
 2. The analysis of the demographic and achievement data and Opinion Surveys that the school completed in Part One of the Self-Study
 3. The school's Mission or other Guiding Statements

- B. Review Self-Study, examining thoroughly the supporting documents and Reporting Booklets that relate to your individual assignment(s). Pay particular attention to the standards and indicators for each of the seven sections in Part Two of the Self-Study.
- C. Take notes on the school's responses to the requirements of Part One of the Self-Study. These are found in the Reporting Booklet for Part One. From these notes, write questions to ask when you meet with members of the school community.
- D. Arrive at the school (1) prepared to share your preliminary findings with your colleagues on the Visiting Team and (2) with some initial thoughts about your own responses to what the school has written. The latter ideas will change as you tour the school, give further review to the supporting documents, and meet with school personnel, parents and students.

During the Visit

Tour of the School

School officials will guide the team on a school tour to acquaint VT members with the facilities and grounds. During that time you should pay particular attention to areas related to Part One. Please take notes on the following issues:

1. Are the general appearance and cleanliness of the campus satisfactory to meet student needs and parent and staff expectations?
2. Do the building and grounds allow for efficient movement of people?
3. Are there potentially serious safety hazards that are evident in the buildings or about the grounds?
4. Are there any significant noise problems that could disrupt classes or other school activities?
5. Are there areas of the school which pose a challenge of accessibility for students and staff?
6. Are there adequate space, facilities and equipment in the library, cafeteria, auditorium, small and large group areas, and in classrooms?
7. Is there evidence of technology resources and infrastructure that can support both the educational program and the school's basic operations.
8. Are the school's guiding statements and samples of student work on display throughout the school?
9. Do the physical facilities accurately reflect the school's own description of the physical resources?
10. Is there evidence that would support parent, staff, or student perceptions of the strengths or weaknesses of plant resources, if any, were referenced in the opinion survey?

Team Orientation Meeting

On the first evening of your visit, the team chair may ask you to comment on your initial perceptions to the rest of the Visiting Team. Be prepared to give brief initial comments about the extent to which what you have read or observed to date reflects the school profile and the survey analysis that the school has written in the Reporting Booklet for Part One.

Meetings with Committees and Groups

During the evaluation visit, you will meet with members of the school community to verify facts presented in the school's Self-Study and to validate its conclusions. In addition, you should be able to determine whether school community members: concur with and support the school's guiding statements, revise policies and procedures periodically in response to self-assessments or external data, and are striving for ongoing improvement. These meetings and related discussions with your team members will be crucial to development of the report(s) 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/individual the opportunity to express opinions, ideas, and concerns. Follow these simple guidelines as you chair or participate in a discussion with school representatives:

- 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. Use the questions below to guide a focus discussion.
- Inquire if there are any relevant changes to the report at hand. 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 additional 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 Part One

The Self-Study Committee for Part One has spent considerable time in developing the School Profile, in reviewing the demographic and student achievement data, and in analyzing the results of that data and the required surveys. The Self-Study committee should be able to provide the following responses:

1. Does the profile accurately describe the school, its students, its programs and services, and its resources? Please explain.
2. Is the profile consistent with other descriptive information about the school (ex. promotional literature or the school's website)? Please explain.
3. Have changes been planned or made in other school documents as a result of the development of the new school profile?
4. How widely has the school profile been disseminated to date? Are there plans for such dissemination and to what audiences?
5. Describe any "surprises" or unanticipated results that emerged as the Self-Study Committee completed the various aspects for its work for Part One.

6. Describe any differences in the makeup of the student body or staff over the past two years. What might explain those differences, if any?
7. Describe any plans for changes in programs or practices that have resulted from the analysis of enrollment or student achievement data.
8. Describe any plans for changes in programs or practices that have resulted from the analysis of the opinion survey data.

Board

It is important to ascertain the extent to which the board has been involved with the development and/or review of the various components of the Part One Self-Study. The following questions are appropriate to board members or the school's owner(s).

1. How was the board involved in the development or review of the School Profile?
2. How many members of the Board participated in the survey? Has the Board reviewed the student data and survey analyses?
3. To what extent is the board in agreement with the school's responses in the Reporting Booklet for Part One
4. What are the ways in which the board routinely analyzes the effectiveness of the school's programs and services in achieving the goals outlined in its guiding statements and in its promotional literature?

School Leadership

The school head and leadership team must be very familiar with the school's responses to the requirements in Part One of the Self-Study. The following questions assume that knowledge.

1. How was management involved in the development of the current philosophy?
2. Are the school's leaders in agreement with the analyses and conclusions reached by the Self-Study committee for Part One?
3. Is the school profile consistent with other information that is provided about the school to faculty and staff and parents?
4. What are typical or routine ways that the school evaluates its own performance and solicits the input of parents, school personnel, parents, and students (as is age-appropriate)?

Teachers

The instructional staff should be knowledgeable about the school's mission and programs and about the students they serve. These questions may be helpful in assessing that assumption.

1. How were teachers involved in the development of the profile that was required as part of the Self-Study process?
2. Can you give examples of the ways in which the school's mission or other guiding statements influence or guide your teaching (or other role at the school)? Please explain.
3. How is student achievement information typically shared with teachers?
4. How do teachers use assessment data to inform instructional practice and assess the effectiveness of the curriculum and instructions?
5. How has the school's analysis of the recent opinion surveys been shared with you? Are there any results that were surprising to you or different from your own perceptions?
6. In what ways do you include or foster intercultural and international themes in your teaching?
7. To what extent have student and staff demographics changed over the last several years. Are there obvious reasons for such changes, if any? How do the changes impact what you do on a daily basis?
8. Do you believe that the school's own descriptive literature accurately reflects what students experience at this school? Explain.

Alumni and Parents

Parents and graduates of the school should feel that theirs are important voices in the school community and that their opinions are sought and valued in developing and assessing school goals and in responding to issues or concerns. These questions may test that assumption.

1. In what ways is your child's experience consistent with the information you received at the time of admissions? Are there significant differences from what you expected?
2. Did you participate in the recent opinion survey for parents? Were the questions helpful in guiding your perceptions about the school?
3. What first attracted you to this school? Are you happy with your decision? Is your child happy and progressing at the school?

Students

Students should be aware of the school's mission and expectations in order to appreciate and benefit from the programs and activities that are offered. Questions posed should consider the relative maturity of the students.

1. What do you like best about your school?
2. How did your parents choose this school for you?
3. What are some ways in which this school is what you expected it to be? How is it different?
4. If you could change one thing about this school, what would it be?
5. What do you think this school is most successful in doing?

Admissions Staff

The admissions office deals with candidates for school entrance and should be aware of the school's materials to recruit new students and its efforts to seek more appropriate education for those who were unable to profit from the school's programs.

1. Are school publications, including admissions materials, consistent with the school's guiding statements and with the new school profile?
2. Do the results of the opinion surveys reflect the strengths or issues or concerns that parents and students verbalize about the school experience?
3. How frequently does the school review and revise its promotional materials?
4. What changes in admissions or other informational materials or protocols, if any, should be considered in light of the data and survey analysis in Part One of the Self-Study?

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 guiding statements.
- 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, e.g. 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, equipment and other teaching resources to support the delivery of the curriculum.

- the level of integration of technology into classroom instruction.
- the extent to which there is evidence of the development of inter-culturalism.

Your observations and findings from interviews, meetings, and classroom visits may be shared with the relevant members of the team, either in VT meetings or in writing (when appropriate).

Writing the Report for Part One

The Eighth Edition of the CIS/NEASC Main Guide to School Evaluation and Accreditation asks the school to be reflective and complete, but precise, concise, and articulate in developing the school profile and in analyzing achievement data and the results of the various opinion surveys. As the team member responsible for Part One you will review and critique, in a similarly concise and precise way, the School Profile, the school's achievement reporting, and its analysis of the results of the various opinion surveys as they are presented in the Part One Reporting Booklet, in red under SSC.

Your report will consist of guided responses to what the school has written and to your own assessment of the profile, demographic and achievement data, and the survey analyses. Your report will be written in the same reporting booklet under VT Response, in blue under VT.

After meeting with individuals and groups and reviewing the school's Self-Study materials, you will be ready to sort out your ideas. First, look at what the school has written about itself and at its supporting materials. Are the descriptive materials complete and accurate? Is the school's review and analysis of data thoughtful and reflective? Is there evidence of any planning for the use of the conclusions reached in developing the profile or through the analysis of data?

In addition, recall your conversations from meetings with the various constituent groups and individuals. Are there common themes that are suggestive of the school's strengths and/or areas needing improvement? Are you in agreement with how the school has evaluated its own work (if so, you may say simply that)? Is there relevant and sufficient documentation for the school's responses to the questions posed in the template?

Finally, develop concise responses to each of the major components of Part One, using the template and guided by the sample questions.

PART TWO – SECTION A

HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

School Guiding Statements

INTRODUCTION

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wish to thank you for participating in an evaluation of an American/international school. The purpose of this eighth edition Handbook for Evaluators is to assist you in fulfilling your responsibilities and assignments as a member of the Visiting Team.

There are three distinct parts to the accreditation process. The School has completed the first part of the process. **Part one** includes the preparation of the School Profile, which is a compilation of factual information about the School and an analysis of the results of an opinion survey. This survey included participation by students who are 11 years of age or older, faculty and support staff, parents, and members of the governing board. In addition the School may have elected to survey former students/alumni from the School. The purpose of the survey is to gather information about the strengths of the School, areas in need of improvement, perceptions of various school stakeholders, and those actions that the school has or will take to develop improvement plans based on the survey data.

Part two of the process was the work of the self-study committee to address the standards outlined in Section A. This self-study committee collected and examined the evidence related to the reason(s) the school exists, the role it has in the community, core values and beliefs about its desired impact on students, its connection to multiculturalism and the international community, its admissions policies and practices. The members of the Visiting Team will add its comments on Part Two Section A directly on the reporting booklet completed by the self-study committee.

Part three of the process involves the development of “Strategies for Improvement.” These strategies were developed by the self-study committee and are based on the major strengths and areas for improvement as well as a comprehensive, well developed set of suggested action steps. The recommendations from the Visiting Team will be added to this list and the joint set of recommendations will form the school’s development/strategic plan for their future work. **Please refer to the Reporting Booklet Part Two - Section A.**

Key to successful school improvement processes are the school’s Guiding Statements: vision, mission and statement of educational goals (or similar). These statements typically reflect a set of core values or beliefs that are commonly held by the school community which have evolved since the inception of the school. These statements establish the school’s direction, define its purpose and set the school’s educational goals. The approach to teaching and learning, the school’s planning and decision making processes, its policies and its operational systems should align closely with the values and beliefs expressed in these guiding statements.

The following definitions may be helpful to the team members:

School Guiding Statements: includes the main statement(s) which define the school and its reasons for existence (e.g. School Philosophy, Core Values, Mission, Vision, Charter, Goals, Objectives, etc.)

School Philosophy: an interconnected set of core values and/or beliefs under which the school operates

School Vision: the ideal state of the school at a point in the distant future; a status that the school always is striving to reach in the spirit of continuous improvement; the desired direction the school will take - what it aims to be in the future.

School Mission Statement: a statement of the school's purpose, its reason for existing including the nature of the student body it is designed to serve. The statement is aligned with the vision statement. Good mission statements often include references to the school's unique features and some of the values and educational beliefs it embraces. A statement of the school's commitment to the concepts of intercultural and international understanding needs to be included in this statement. These are vital features given that the school has chosen to participate in an international accreditation process.

School Goals/Aims: future expected outcomes that provide programmatic direction and that focus on the ends rather than means; most effective when categorized around major themes, responsibilities, programs or areas of need.

School Objectives: statements of actionable steps or short term accomplishments that are measurable, specific and time constrained and assist the school in reaching its goals; may apply to process and/or outcomes and are typically written specific to each goal.

Schools may apply different definitions based on regional/cultural understandings of these terms. Most important is that all school stakeholders apply these terms consistently in guiding all aspects of the school.

To ensure understanding and ownership by the community, it is important that these statements are developed and reviewed on a regular basis by a broad cross-section of the school community. There must be strong consensus about the school's Guiding Statements and the importance of a collaborative approach toward the attainment of school goals. School policies and procedures must be extensions of the Guiding Statements, indicating the manner in which the school intends to pursue its vision and achieve educational goals and objectives.

Within this section the school examines the quality and effectiveness of its Guiding Statements. It also seeks to examine the effectiveness of action planning processes used toward achieving its mission and educational goals, pursuing the school's vision and exemplifying the school's core values and beliefs. It will describe the tools used to measure the level of success the school has had in implementing its Guiding Statements. The alignment of admissions policies and procedures with the school's Guiding Statements is also considered.

Fundamental to a school seeking international accreditation is its commitment to the promotion of international and intercultural understanding, and this section places particular emphasis on these concepts.

As a general guide, an effective set of Guiding Statements commonly contain many of the following:

- Reasons for the school's existence, including the nature of the student body it is designed to serve.
- The role of the school in the community it serves.
- Beliefs about effective educational practices.
- The collective vision for the school in providing educational opportunities for all students.
- The intellectual, personal, social, physical, and affective characteristics to be nurtured in students.
- The roles and relationships expected of students, parents, faculty and support staff, school leaders and the governing body in the educational process of the school.
- A commitment to promote international and intercultural experiences for students.

A school's educational goals should flow from the mission and vision statements, and should be practical and measurable in nature. They should be written in such a way that any given school division or academic area can derive its own specific objectives from the general school-wide list of goals.

The school will be evaluated on the basis of all CIS/NEASC standards and indicators. The evaluation of the school's Guiding Statements will be based on the standards which are printed below in bold letters followed by their related indicators.

Before the Visit

When you arrive at the school, you will be consumed with Visiting Team activities. Time will be tightly scheduled. For these reasons, you are strongly advised to become familiar with all relevant documents before you arrive at the school. Every hour that you spend in pre-visit preparation will be invaluable to you during the Team Visit.

Document Review

The visitor should carefully review the complete self-study and thoroughly examine the documents related to your assigned sections, the school profile and the results of the survey. These were all prepared by the school in preparation for the Team Visit. The visitor is also urged to review the preliminary/preparatory report. This report was submitted by representatives from CIS and/or NEASC who conducted this preliminary/preparatory visit. Finally the visitor should review many of the documents that could provide evidence that the school is meeting this standard. These documents will be included in the information sent to you prior to the visit, typically in the form of internet links or documents saved on electronic media for you to access. Copies of all of these documents will be labelled and available in the Visiting Team room.

Types of documents reflecting the schools Guiding Statements:

- School philosophy
- School vision
- School mission statement
- Core values/beliefs
- School goals
- School objectives
- Admissions policies

Admissions documentation
School promotional literature
Student, staff, and parent manuals/handbooks
Curriculum documents
Extracurricular offerings
Demographic information of students and staff

Most or all of these materials will be available depending on how the school organizes its Guiding Statements. Other similar statements and/or documents may enhance or substitute for documents in the above list. Take notes on the standards and indicators on Guiding Statements and the documents you review before the visit. From these notes, write questions to ask when you meet with members of the school community. Arrive at the school prepared to discuss your preliminary findings with your colleagues on the visiting team. Consult the glossary at the end of this handbook for terms which are unfamiliar to you.

SECTION A: STANDARDS & INDICATORS

Note: The term “governing body” includes any school ownership structure.

STANDARD A1

The school shall be guided by clear and broadly accepted Guiding Statements of vision, mission, and educational objectives (or the equivalent using the school’s chosen nomenclature and format) for students.

A1a

The school’s Guiding Statements establish clear expectations for student learning and guidelines for the well-being of the whole school community.

A1b

Monitoring procedures exist which show that the school’s Guiding Statements enjoy a high degree of support from the governing body, school leadership, staff, parents and students with this support being demonstrated by the actions of all these school sectors.

A1c

There is evidence which shows that the school’s Guiding Statements drive decision-making, planning, action and review at multiple levels of school life.

A1d

There are periodic, data-driven reviews of the school’s Guiding Statements which involve the broad school community and which ensure that the statements remain vibrant and relevant.

A1e

A formal process and defined indicators are used to assess the school’s success in achieving its aims as laid out in its Guiding Statements

STANDARD A2

The school's Guiding Statements shall clearly demonstrate a commitment to internationalism/interculturalism in education, and this shall be reflected throughout the life of the institution.

A2a

The school has created an engaging and contextually appropriate definition of internationalism/interculturalism in education.

A2b

The school puts into action its definition of internationalism/interculturalism in education, both inside and outside the classroom, as evidenced by impact on students.

A2c

The school expresses its commitment to internationalism/interculturalism in education through as many avenues as possible. (See list in appendix)

STANDARD A3

The school's Vision for Students (or similar) shall demonstrate a clear commitment to fostering desirable traits related to internationalism/interculturalism, and this shall impact upon all students.

The school is committed to, and is actively promoting in its students, internationalism/interculturalism in education through

A3a

.... discussion of substantive matters of principle from multiple perspectives.

A3b

.... the understanding of the histories, cultures, beliefs, values and perspectives of a range of individuals and peoples.

A3c

.... the understanding of current issues of global significance relating to geopolitics, the environment, health, trade, sustainable development and human rights.

A3d

.... development of fluency in the language(s) of instruction, in another language, and - with as much support as the school can offer - in student mother tongues.

A3e

.... the development of their disposition to serve the community - local and global - through engagement in meaningful and reflective service.

A3f

.... the acquisition and refinement of the skills of leading and following, collaborating, adapting to the ideas of others, constructive problem-solving, and conflict-resolution through experiencing leadership in authentic contexts.

STANDARD A4

The school's admissions policies and practices shall ensure there is alignment between its Guiding Statements, its programs, and the students admitted to and remaining at the school.

A4a

The school's promotional materials and activities project a realistic picture of the school and its mission, objectives and programs, hence enabling parents to appraise the school's suitability for their children.

A4b

The school's admissions policies and practices require that adequate information be obtained, and that appropriate evaluations be carried out, to ensure that there is alignment between a student's needs/abilities and the programs offered.

Role as a Visiting Team Member

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

- a) how the statement promulgates the core values of the school and its intent to integrate them into its culture,
- b) how the school developed a consensus which reflects the needs, abilities and interests of the entire school community,
- c) how procedures determine the school's degree of success in carrying out the Guiding Statements,
- d) how and where the school publicizes the statements throughout the entire school community,
- e) how the school's admissions practices, policies and promotional materials promote and reflect the spirit of the Guiding Statements, and
- f) how the school instills international and intercultural understanding into the school community.

During the Team Visit

The school hosts 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 subject areas and the section on the school's Guiding Statements. 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.

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 Guiding Statements. 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?
8. Are the school's Guiding Statements adequately displayed throughout the facility?
9. Are internationalism and interculturalism evident throughout the school?

Team Orientation Meeting

On the first evening of your visit, the team chair may ask you to review the standard on Guiding Statements with the rest of the committee. If so, be prepared to give your initial perceptions, based on your reading of the School Profile, the analysis of the opinion surveys and the self-study and your observations of the school's adherence to the standards as reflected in the evidence that the school has collected and the identified strategies for improving the delivery of services included in these standards. Sharing your perceptions with team members may help you identify areas for further investigation. Keep in mind that school improvement and self-reflection are the ultimate goals of the evaluation.

Meetings with Committees and Groups

During the team visit you will meet with members of the school community to verify facts presented in the school's self-study and validate its conclusions as well as the strategies for improvement. In addition, you should be able to determine whether community members concur with and support the philosophy, revise policies and procedures periodically, and are striving to attain the school's objectives. 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.
- Take notes to assist you in preparing the report.
- 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 additional to add and be sure to state your willingness to meet with individuals at a later time.
- Conclude the meeting on time. Most participants will have other obligations.

Self-Study Committee on Guiding Statements

The self-study committee spent considerable time in creating or revising the school's Guiding Statements and developed a sense of how well the school meets the applicable standards. The committee should be able to provide the following responses:

1. Have the Guiding Statements changed in any significant ways since the self-study was last approved? Please explain.
2. Do you feel that the revision process permitted sufficient input from the school community? Please explain.
3. Where are the statements displayed? Do you feel these locations are sufficient to ensure a familiarity with the document?
4. Do members of the school community understand and accept the statements? How have you determined that?
5. Do you feel that the statements consider the range of students the school seeks to educate? Why?
6. How do the statements promote intercultural and international experiences for its students? Please elaborate.
7. What plans has the school made to review and/or revise the Guiding Statements on a routine basis?
8. Does promotional literature convey a realistic picture of the school?
9. Describe how admissions policies and procedures are examined to ensure that the school serves the students it intends and the full range of those students' needs?

Board

The board should have a clear understanding of the Guiding Statements and the degree to which the statements affect every aspect of the school.

1. How was the board involved in the development of the Guiding Statements?
2. In what ways do the Guiding Statements influence all school activities?
3. How do the Guiding Statements guide policy-setting with respect to admissions?
4. How are the Guiding Statements used to assess the success of the school?
5. Does the board support the provision of intercultural and international education? Please elaborate.

School Leadership Team

The school head and leadership team must be very familiar with the Guiding Statements and understand how they provide the impetus for school improvement. On a daily basis, school leaders will carry out the intentions of the school's Guiding Statements and their underlying core values and beliefs.

1. How was the school head and leadership team involved in the development of the current Guiding Statements?
2. How do the Guiding Statements influence all school activities?
3. In what ways do the statements guide you in your daily work?
4. How does the school publicize the Guiding Statements throughout the school year?
5. How are the Guiding Statements used to measure student progress?

Teachers

The instructional staff ought to be very knowledgeable about the Guiding Statements and should strive to incorporate them into their teaching. They can provide daily encouragement to students in carrying out the statements.

1. How were teachers involved in the development of the statements?
2. Do you accept the Guiding Statements as a guiding influence in your work? Please explain.
3. In what ways are the statements considered when the school plans curriculum revisions?
4. How would a teacher provide input into the admissions practices?
5. To what extent do admissions practices result in a good match between accepted students and the school offerings?
6. In what ways have you promoted intercultural and international themes in your teaching?

Alumni and Parents

Parents and graduates of the school should feel that they are important elements in the school community and that their opinions are sought and valued in developing the school's Guiding Statements.

1. How do the Guiding Statements reflect your child's needs?
2. Describe ways you feel that the school is attempting to provide an appropriate education for your child or children?
3. Describe ways in which your opinions were considered when the Guiding Statements were developed or last revised?
4. Describe ways in which the system of grade reporting keeps you aware of your child's academic status?

Owner

The owner(s) have considerable latitude in operating the school but there should be opportunities for management and staff to contribute their professional expertise to school operations.

1. What members of the school community assisted in developing the Guiding Statements?
2. How do groups in the school community assist in developing school programs?
3. What outside professional consultation has been sought in relation to school operations?
4. How do you attempt to carry out the Guiding Statements in your decisions about the school? Please explain.

Students

Students should be aware of the school's purposes in order to appreciate the programs and activities which are offered. Questions posed should consider the relative maturity of the students. The interviewer might explain to students the types of philosophy, vision and mission the school uses and their purpose, but use the terms that the school uses for these statements.

1. When have you heard the philosophy, vision and mission discussed?
2. Where have you seen the philosophy, vision and mission displayed? Do you understand how the statements affect all that happens in the school?
3. How were students involved in writing the philosophy, vision and mission?
4. Have you discussed the school's philosophy, vision and mission with your classmates?
5. Do you feel that you are learning enough about other countries and their culture?
6. Is there anything in the philosophy, vision and mission that helped you and your family decide that this was the best place for you to attend school?

Admissions

The admissions office deals with candidates for school entrance and should be aware of the school's materials to recruit new students and its efforts to seek more appropriate education for those who were unable to profit from the school's programs.

1. Are school publications, including admissions materials, consistent with the Guiding Statements?
2. Do successful candidates for admission reflect the range of students noted in the Guiding Statements? Please explain.
3. Are students being provided the academic programs necessary to be successful in future schooling? Please explain.
4. Does the school assist unsuccessful students to find more appropriate schooling? How?
5. Does the information sought on candidates give promise that those admitted can be successful?

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 Guiding Statements.
- 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, e.g. 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.
- international/intercultural evidence.

Your observations and findings from interviews, meetings and classroom visits may be shared with the relevant members of the team either in VT meetings or in writing (when appropriate).

Evaluation of School Policies and Procedures

This Eighth Edition of the Handbook for Evaluation and Accreditation, "Journey to Excellence in International Education" emphasizes specific policies and procedures in its standards and indicators. As the team member responsible for Guiding Statements, you will review and critique the written policies and procedures that relate to this section, including:

- admissions and placement
- student assessments
- student records, including policies on confidentiality
- reports on student achievement
- procedures which assist such an individual to find a more appropriate education

Comments on specific policies and procedures should be discussed with the members of the Visiting Team.

Preparing the School's Guiding Statements, Section A of the Visiting Team Report

Members of the Visiting Team will add their comments on Part Two Section A directly onto the Reporting Booklet. These comments will be displayed in blue font. Upon completion the comments of the Visiting team will be locked by the Team Chair.

There are five steps in this process. These steps include: rating the standard, identifying the evidence to support the rating, any significant commendations (if appropriate), and significant recommendation (if indicated) and any additional advice (if indicated).

VT STEP (a):

Give a rating 1, 2, 3 or 4 for this Standard.

| <i>"Does Not Meet the Standard"</i> | | <i>"Meets the Standard"</i> | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Rating 1 | Rating 2 | Rating 3 | Rating 4 |
| There is currently evidence of very little or no alignment with this Standard. | There is currently evidence of partial but insufficient alignment with this Standard. Considerable work still needs to be done to come into alignment. | There is evidence of generally good alignment with this Standard. There is still some room for further development, and the school intends to address this. | There is evidence of excellent and effective alignment with this Standard. The school has embedded systems in place to ensure that alignment will be sustained. |

VT STEP (b):

Summarize in list form the evidence (given by the school and verified by the Team, or identified by the Team itself) which supports the rating the Team has given to this Standard and which may lead to any Significant Commendations, Significant Recommendations, or Additional Advice given in the steps below.

VT STEP (c):

Write Significant Commendations (if any) with respect to this Standard.

VT STEP (d):

Write Significant Recommendations (if any) for action to bring the school into better alignment with this Standard i.e. to move the school from a lower to a higher rating on the progressive scale 1 to 4.

Note – the school will be required to respond formally to these Significant Recommendations in its Two Year and Five Year Reports on Progress & Planning.

VT STEP (e):

Write Additional Advice (if any) on how the school could further develop to enhance its alignment with this Standard.

Please note: On each template, there are allotted areas for the future Visiting Team to add its comments below the Self-Study Committee's report.

PART TWO – SECTION B – 1

HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

Teaching and Learning – Vertical Summary Report

INTRODUCTION

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wish to thank you for participating in an evaluation of an American/international school. The purpose of this Handbook for Evaluators is to assist you in fulfilling your responsibilities and assignments as a member of the Visiting Team.

There are three distinct parts to the accreditation process. The School has completed the first part of the process. **Part one** includes the preparation of the School Profile which is a compilation of factual information about the School and the analysis of the results of an opinion survey. This survey includes participation by students who are 11 years of age or older, faculty and support staff, parents, members of the governing board. In addition the School may elect to survey former students/alumni from the School. The focus of the survey is to gather information about the strengths of the School, areas in need of improvement, different perception of the community sectors and those actions that the school has or will take to develop improvement plans based on the survey data.

Part two of the process includes the work of the self-study committee to address the standards outlined in Section B. This self-study committee has collected and examined the evidence related to learning support, language support, counseling and advisory support and health services. The members of the Visiting Team will add its comments on Part Two Section B directly on the reporting booklet completed by the self-study committee.

Part three of the process involves the development of “Strategies for Improvement.” These strategies were developed by the self-study committee and are based on the major strengths and areas for improvement as well as a comprehensive, well developed set of suggested action steps. The recommendations from the Visiting Team will be added to this list and the joint set of recommendations will form the school’s development/strategic plan for their future work. **Please refer to the Reporting Booklet Part Two – Section B.**

The Teaching and Learning standards address the design, delivery, assessment and review of the full range of educational experiences and programs that make up the school experience. Section B is different from the other Sections (A, C-G) in that it articulates standards and indicators that will be used to create a report for each grade level division or grouping (e.g. Section B – Elementary, Section B – Middle School, Section B – Secondary) as the school identifies and organizes them, rather than a single report for the entire school.

Those Teaching and Learning reports for the grade-level divisions will be followed by an “umbrella” vertical summary report based on reports that the school has written on each and every one of the identifiable subject area strands within the school. So, for example, the school will typically produce separate vertical section B reports for Mathematics, English Language,

Other Languages, Natural Sciences, etc, and then take the findings from these reports, analyze them and summarize the findings in an overall “umbrella” vertical report. The school will use the same set of Teaching and Learning standards and indicators to create a series of vertical curriculum reports, one for each of the subject areas that are taught (e.g. Section B – Mathematics, Section B – Music, Section B – Science, etc.).

You are responsible for writing a report on the school’s alignment with the standards on Teaching and Learning for the vertical summary report. The report must indicate how clearly the school has articulated the content of the subject area, how well it meets its instructional goals with the school’s students and how it supports the school’s Guiding Statements. We suggest you approach your work in the following sequence:

Before the Visit

- A. Read the Standards and Indicators for Accreditation on Teaching and Learning which are listed below. Prepare any questions you may wish to ask the visiting team chair about the meaning of the standards.
- B. Review the school’s Community, School, and Student Profiles, the Opinion Surveys and the Guiding Statements. This information should be kept in mind as you determine the adequacy of your assigned subject area.
- C. Review the school’s vertical summary report and its ratings on the standards and indicators for Teaching and Learning. Take notes on the sections of the school’s self-study materials which you would like to investigate further. From these notes, write questions for those who worked on the self-study report. Review the preliminary/preparatory report. This report was submitted by the two representatives who conducted this preliminary/preparatory visit. Finally, review the Appendix B for Section B located at the back of the Self-Study Report which includes a listing of suggested documents that could provide evidence that the school is meeting this standard. Many of these documents may be attached to the Self-Study as links or saved on electronic media for you to access. Copies of these documents will be labeled and available in the Visiting Team room.
- D. Questions should be prompted by and focused on the vertical report status relative to the standards and indicators. Identify topics, issues and questions to be reviewed from the wide range of other information sources at the school. The sample questions that follow are intended to assist you in developing your own questions. Please note that the questions are “open-ended”, intended to elicit additional information from the vertical report self-study committee.
 1. How do you establish vertical curriculum articulation within this discipline?
 2. Describe the process you used to determine the effectiveness of teaching and learning?
 3. What is the process used to make modifications in the curriculum for this subject area?
 4. What part does the student assessment information available to you play in making revisions in curriculum content? In teaching approaches and methodology?

5. What professional development opportunities have been made available to you to help you with your efforts to design and present the curriculum in this area?
6. How do you incorporate the skills and abilities which will prepare students for lifelong learning into your courses and classes?

Possible Sources of Information

Standard

- B1 Actual policies, survey responses, curriculum guides
- B2 Curriculum Guides, survey responses, discussions with staff students and parents
- B3 Curriculum Guides, classroom observations, discussions with teachers/staff and students
- B4 Staff/teachers/students/parents discussions, survey responses, Curriculum Guides
- B5 Professional Development Plans, Curriculum Guides, survey responses, teachers, students
- B6 Classroom visits, parents, teachers, students, survey responses
- B7 Management, teachers, support staff, library/media//IT, and students
- B8 Assessment data, school profile, curriculum guides, evaluation tools, Part One Information
- B9 Assessment Data, Part One, teachers/management
- B10 Survey responses, students, parents, management

Standards and Indicators

There are distinct reports for Section B – Teaching and Learning – which the school must produce.

1. ***Vertical Approach Reports by Subject Area*** - The school must use the Section B Standards and Indicators to create separate vertical reports for each of the identifiable subject areas taught (e.g. Section B – Mathematics, Section B – Music – Section B – Natural Sciences, etc.). Each of these reports should cover the full range of Grades/Year-Groups in which the subject is taught. It will be the school's decision as to how many vertical reports will be needed in order to cover the full range of subject offerings. This will depend on how many can be justifiably grouped together into "subject areas". (See Appendix B for more guidelines on this topic in the "Journey to Excellence in International Education.")

The school must keep the above-mentioned collection of vertical reports on file for the eventual perusal by the Visiting Team as needed, **but these individual subject reports will not be submitted as part of the completed Section B Self-Study Report.**

2. ***Vertical Summary Report*** – A Section B Vertical Summary Committee must use the above-mentioned collection of vertical subject reports to create an "umbrella" vertical report using the same Section B instructions. **This vertical summary report will be submitted to the accreditation agency and members of the future Visiting Team as part of the completed Section B Self-Study Report.** The Vertical Subjects Rating Grid Found in Appendix B will help the SSC to organize and record its analysis of the separate vertical reports. This completed ratings grid **must be** submitted with the Vertical Summary Report.
3. ***Horizontal Approach Reports by School Division*** – Using the same set of Standards and Indicators, separate Section B reports must be created for each identifiable school division/phase. The number of these horizontal reports will reflect the school's own particular grade range and organizational structure (e.g. Section B Elementary School; Section B Middle School; Section B Secondary School etc.), and this will be the school's

own decision. All horizontal reports **will be** submitted to the accreditation agency and members of the future Visiting Team as part of the completed Section B Self-Study Report.

All reports use the same standards and indicators. The evaluation of the school's Teaching and Learning and Vertical Summary Report will be based on the standards which are printed below in bold letters followed by their related indicators:

SECTION B: STANDARDS & INDICATORS

STANDARD B1

The curriculum, in its content, design, implementation, assessment and review, shall reflect the school's mission, learning objectives, and policies and shall foster global citizenship and student achievement.

B1a

The school's curriculum design, teaching practices, and student learning experiences are aligned with its mission and objectives.

B1b

The school's curriculum and programs are supported by a comprehensive set of teaching and learning policies.

B1c

The formal curriculum offers an appropriate range of disciplines, including those that foster the development of global citizenship.

B1d

There is evidence of alignment between the written curriculum, the taught curriculum and student learning.

B1e

The school has a clearly articulated vision of quality learning and defined practices that support student achievement.

STANDARD B2

Students shall have access to a curriculum that provides challenge but also supports varied developmental, academic, social, physical and emotional needs and fosters the development of skills and abilities that prepare students for lifelong learning.

B2a

The effectiveness of the school's curriculum design and the varied implementation methods used, is evidenced by students being full participants in the learning process.

B2b

The curriculum design, teaching strategies, and support resources provided ensure that all students can profit from school offerings and that all students are challenged by the content of their courses.

B2c

The curriculum emphasizes the processes of gathering, organizing, presenting, and applying ideas and information as well as the mastery of content knowledge.

B2d

The curriculum provides students with opportunities to learn, develop, and apply skills in critical thinking, evaluating, interpreting, synthesizing, and problem solving.

B2e

The curriculum provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate awareness of their own learning styles.

B2f

The curriculum includes opportunities for students to acquire skills in accessing and evaluating information from print and media resources and in using the tools of technology.

STANDARD B3

Teaching and learning shall be guided by comprehensive curriculum documentation that reflects horizontal and vertical articulation as a means of providing students with meaningful connections among and between disciplines and continuity within disciplines.

B3a

Written curriculum materials specify expected learning outcomes in terms of what students should know, understand, and be able to do.

B3b

Written curriculum materials indicate content and sequence for each course/grade.

B3c

Written curriculum materials include references to the methodologies, teaching materials and resources that are used.

B3d

Written curriculum materials include references to the assessments that are used to measure student progress.

B3e

Written curriculum materials include references to links within and across disciplines.

B3f

The written curriculum describes multi-disciplinary experiences and/or activities, where appropriate, to foster authentic learning.

B3g

There is clear designation of responsibility for overseeing effective school-wide curriculum planning, design, articulation, implementation, and review.

B3h

Teachers meet with colleagues, as necessary, to strengthen vertical curriculum articulation and to ensure a logical sequence that minimizes overlap or gaps in content.

B3i

Teachers meet with colleagues, as necessary, to strengthen horizontal curriculum articulation that enhances meaning and connections for students.

STANDARD B4

Students shall benefit from a curriculum and related activities that shall be enhanced by the cultural diversity of both the host country and the school community, hence contributing to the development of global citizenship in students.

B4a

Information about the local culture and physical environment is imbedded into the curriculum and related activities to enhance student learning and contribute to the development of global citizens.

B4b

The school can cite specific examples indicating that the diversity of the school community is used to enrich the curriculum, enhance student learning and contribute to the development of global citizens.

STANDARD B5

The school shall provide ongoing professional development that improves the design, implementation, and assessment of the curriculum, reflects the needs of the faculty, and benefits student learning.

B5a

The school provides relevant professional development to assist teachers in designing curriculum and developing assessments that provide evidence of student learning.

B5b

The school provides professional development in content areas relevant to teachers' assignments.

B5c

The school provides professional development to assist teachers in improving pedagogy, for example through reference to best practices and the use of technology, in order to enhance teaching /learning and strengthen student engagement.

B5d

The faculty has an avenue for input into the planning of professional development activities.

B5e

Planning for professional development includes attention to needs that are identified through analysis of student achievement, review of school goals, and the faculty appraisal process.

STANDARD B6

Teaching practices shall reflect an understanding of the different ways in which students learn, and this is evidenced by student engagement and performance.

B6a

Teaching methods and student learning activities are varied according to the nature of the subject matter.

B6b

Teachers create stimulating learning environments that are evidenced by students who are engaged and active participants in their learning.

B6c

Teachers use varied methods, materials and technology to address individual student needs, abilities and learning styles.

B6d

Teaching methods provide appropriately for students for whom English (or other language of instruction) is not the first language.

STANDARD B7

The school shall provide appropriate support and resources to implement the curriculum and allow access and full participation by all students.

B7a

Class sizes are defined according to the subject and/or grade, student needs, and the number and qualifications of staff members present.

B7b

The school provides suitable texts, an age-appropriate library/media collection, and other print materials to support learning objectives.

B7c

Technology and media resources are up-to-date, accessible to all, and available in sufficient supply to support learning objectives.

B7d

Specialized equipment is available, up-to-date, and well maintained to support learning objectives in those areas that require it (e.g. science labs, AV/ICT, PE and Arts materials, etc.).

B7e

Assignment of teachers reflects expertise and qualifications in the appropriate subject/content area(s).

B7f

Support staff members are assigned to assist teachers in those areas where it is appropriate.

B7g

Library/media personnel are available and suitably qualified to collaborate with faculty, engage in curriculum development, and support students in acquiring and applying research skills to achieve curriculum goals.

B7h

IT personnel are available and suitably qualified to collaborate with faculty, engage in curriculum development, and support students and faculty in acquiring and applying IT skills.

STANDARD B8

The school shall have formal procedures and defined criteria to effectively and regularly assess the impact of teaching strategies and the level of student performance.

B8a

Teachers develop and implement assessments that can be used to ascertain student achievement of the desired outcomes.

B8b

Expected learner outcomes and grading standards and criteria are clearly stated and available in advance to students and parents.

B8c

Students demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment models such as formal testing, self assessment, peer review, projects, etc.

B8d

The school has processes for comparing and analyzing its students' achievements with those of similar students elsewhere.

B8e

Teachers can cite examples of the use of the results of student assessment in a formative way to effectively modify teaching and to improve learning.

STANDARD B9

Curriculum review and revisions shall be completed at periodic intervals, and changes shall reflect the school's mission, current educational practice, and the results of student assessment with the goal of enhancing student participation and performance.

B9a

Teachers, school administrators and relevant members of the support staff collaborate to develop, review and revise the curriculum on a regular basis.

B9b

The school encourages pilot curriculum innovations and exploration of new teaching strategies, monitored by appropriate assessment techniques.

B9c

There is evidence that current educational practice is considered in revising curriculum and instruction.

B9d

Curriculum revisions reflect the school's mission and objectives, and are informed by the results of student achievement.

B9e

Curriculum revisions and changes are made in the context of an overarching curriculum plan.

STANDARD B10

The school shall have formal processes for recording, analyzing, and reporting evidence of both school-wide achievement and individual student performance to parents and other appropriate members of the school community as a means of measuring success in meeting stated goals.

B10a

The school has thorough and effective systems for tracking, analyzing and reporting on school-wide and individual student performance, and for measuring success in meeting stated goals.

B10b

The school provides timely, meaningful and clearly understood information that helps parents remain advised of their child's achievements and enables them to support on-going progress.

B10c

The overall results of external tests/examination, if used, are shared with appropriate members of the school community and are analyzed to support on-going student achievement.

B10d

Data gathered from graduates or past students is considered when determining the effectiveness of the school's program.

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 Teaching and Learning and any section 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 which pose a challenge of accessibility for students and staff?
7. Are there adequate space, facilities and equipment in the library, cafeteria, auditorium, small and large group areas and classrooms?
8. Are there sufficient resources to support all aspects of teaching and learning?
9. Does the faculty have satisfactory space for collaboration and preparation?

10. Are there sufficient and appropriate instructional spaces to support Teaching and Learning?
11. Is there evidence of technology support for Teaching and Learning?

Team Orientation Meeting

On the first evening of your visit, the team chair may ask you to review the standard on Teaching and Learning 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 guiding statements, 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 additional 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 Teaching and Learning

The self-study committee developed a sense of how well the school meets CIS/NEASC standards on Teaching and Learning. The committee should be able to provide the following responses:

1. How has the school's curriculum changed in any significant ways since the self-study on Teaching and Learning was last approved?
2. Describe the process used to assure that the curriculum, from design to assessment and review, reflects the school's guiding statements.
3. How effectively does the school's curriculum meet the full range of student needs and abilities? How do you determine that?

4. Describe the process used to develop the school's professional development program. How do you determine areas of need/focus?
5. Describe the process the school uses to regularly assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning. How effective is that process? What steps has the school taken within the last two years as a result of this process?
6. What process and methods are used to record, analyze and report about the results of school and student performance? To whom is that information reported? When? How?

Board

The Visiting Team will meet with the board to understand its involvement in the governance of the school. This meeting may also model interviewing techniques for the visiting team. Since many team members may attend, you may not be able to ask all your questions. Based on your review of the material you have received, select the most important areas of inquiry such as:

1. How does the board assure itself that the school's curriculum meets the school's mission and reflects the school's Guiding Statements?
2. How effectively does the school's curriculum meet the full range of student needs and abilities? How do you determine that?
3. How does the board determine the allocation of financial resources to the various elements of the school's program? How does the board determine that the program is adequately supported?
4. What steps could the school take for future development?
5. Describe how the information about school and student performance is used in developing the school's educational and financial plans and the strategies necessary to accomplish them.

Parents

Meet with parents to learn their perceptions of the curriculum program. It is likely that they will not have specific knowledge of the findings of the self-study. Ask questions such as:

1. How would you describe this school's Guiding Statements?
2. What information do you receive from the school about the curriculum? How useful is that information to you in planning for your child?
3. Does your child have the necessary learning materials (texts, equipment, supplemental materials) for a good academic experience?
4. How has the faculty explained what your child should learn and how to you now about the school's grading standards?
5. How well is the school meeting your child's educational needs?
6. What steps could the school take for future development?

Teachers

Although all teachers were involved in the approval of all self-study reports, teachers may not know specifics regarding offerings in instructional areas other than their own. Try to learn their perception of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the curriculum program as well as student activities. Ask questions such as the following:

1. How adequate is the curriculum for the range of student needs and abilities in your class(es)?
2. How do you connect your curriculum/program with that of teachers in other grades/disciplines? How effective is that process?
3. How responsive has the school been to your needs for professional development? Describe any changes you have made in curriculum content or instructional approaches as a result of professional development work.
4. How does the school assess the effectiveness of teachers?

5. How do you measure your class/course/program's effectiveness? How does the school determine effectiveness?
6. What steps could the school take for future development?

Special Needs Teachers, Guidance Counselors, Language Support Staff

You may wish to meet with these staff members to discuss such curriculum issues as the varied developmental, academic, social, physical and emotional needs of students; skills and abilities which will prepare students for lifelong learning and internationalism/interculturalism; the range of curriculum approaches and teaching strategies that recognize diverse learning styles; assessment practices; collaboration and transition practices; and the like.

1. Describe the instructional resources and written curricula provided to meet the needs of special education and English language support students.
2. What processes provide students with modifications to the regular education curriculum?
3. How is the progress of students receiving specialized programs reported to parents?
4. What is the role of guidance counselors in advocating for students who are experiencing academic difficulty?
5. What steps could the school take for future development?

Head of School

As the visiting team member assigned to Teaching and Learning, you will probably meet with the head of school. You will want to learn about the school's planning processes (data collection-analysis-planning-action-evaluation), the use of school and student performance data in the development of school plans and the school head's involvement in and support of curriculum development and evaluation.

1. Describe the process used to achieve an articulated curriculum within grade level divisions and academic disciplines. How effective is that process? Who is responsible for overseeing effective curriculum planning, design and implementation?
2. Describe the process to develop the school's professional development program? How do you assess the effectiveness of the professional development efforts?
3. To what extent are teachers' instructional techniques varied and appropriate for the range of student abilities and learning styles? How do you know that?
4. How do school finances support the curriculum?
5. How do you assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning within the school?
6. How effective are student assessment data in the curriculum evaluation and review process?
7. What steps could the school take for future development?

School Curriculum Leadership Team

Meet with school management groups such as principals who report to the head of school, department heads or supervisors to provide you with detailed information about the curriculum loop (design, delivery, assessment, and review), the methods of horizontal and vertical curriculum coordination and articulation, and the levels of support for the teachers' delivery of the curriculum.

1. How well is the curriculum articulated among subjects and coordinated with other school levels?
2. How effectively does the school's curriculum meet the full range of student needs and abilities? How do you determine that?
3. Describe the school's efforts to assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning on a routine basis?
4. How do you assist teachers to be conversant with current educational thinking and pedagogical approaches?

5. How does the school define its commitment to internationalism/interculturalism for a global society?
6. What steps could the school take for future development?

Students

Meet with students to understand their knowledge of the school's curriculum. Those responsible for secondary curriculum should meet with secondary students and those responsible for middle school curriculum should meet with middle school students. Those responsible for elementary or early childhood levels of curriculum should consult the school and meet with elementary students as you and the school agree is comfortable and appropriate for such students. It is unlikely that students will have specific knowledge of the findings of the self-study. Ask questions such as the following:

1. How would you describe this school to a friend who may be considering enrolling here?
2. How challenging is the schoolwork here?
3. Do you have all of the learning materials and equipment you need in all of your classes/courses? If there are shortages, where are they?
4. How do your teachers explain expected learner outcomes and grading standards to you? Do you know exactly what you are expected to know and be able to do?
5. What steps could the school take for future development?

Classroom Visits

One of the team's responsibilities is to visit all classroom teachers. 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 Guiding Statements.
- 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.
- The ideal of globalization in an international/intercultural school setting.

Your observations and finding from interviews, meetings, and classroom visits may be shared with the relevant members of the team, either in VT meetings or in writing (when appropriate).

Evaluation of School Policies and Procedures

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

- admissions and placement
- student assessment
- student records

- student achievement
- faculty professional development

Comments on specific policies and procedures may be inserted in Evidence/Additional Advice sections.

Writing the Teaching and Learning Report

Your report on Teaching and Learning will contain five steps (Standard Rating, Evidence supporting the rating, Significant Commendations, Significant Recommendations and Additional Advice) for each of the ten standards for Teaching and Learning.

VT STEP (a):

Give a rating 1, 2, 3 or 4 for this Standard.

| <i>“Does Not Meet the Standard”</i> | | <i>“Meets the Standard”</i> | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Rating 1 | Rating 2 | Rating 3 | Rating 4 |
| There is currently evidence of very little or no alignment with this Standard. | There is currently evidence of partial alignment with this Standard. Considerable work still needs to be done to come into alignment. | There is evidence of generally good alignment with this Standard. There is still some room for further development, and the school intends to address this. | There is evidence of excellent and effective alignment with this Standard. The school has embedded systems in place to ensure that alignment will be sustained. |

VT STEP (b):

Summarize in list form the evidence (given by the school and verified by the Team, or identified by the Team itself) which supports the rating the Team has given to this Standard and which may lead to any Significant Commendations, Significant Recommendations, or Additional Advice given in the steps below.

VT STEP (c):

Write Significant Commendations (if any) with respect to this Standard.

VT STEP (d):

Write Significant Recommendations (if any) for action to bring the school into better alignment with this Standard i.e. to move the school from a lower to a higher rating on the progressive scale 1 to 4.

Note – the school will be required to respond formally to these Significant Recommendations in its Two Year and Five Year Reports on Progress & Planning.

VT STEP (e):

Write Additional Advice (if any) on how the school could further develop to enhance its alignment with this Standard.

Please note: On each template, there are allotted areas for the future Visiting Team to add its comments below the Self-Study Committee’s report.

PART TWO – SECTION B - 2

HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

Teaching and Learning – Horizontal Reports

INTRODUCTION

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wish to thank you for participating in an evaluation of an American/international school. The purpose of this Handbook for Evaluators is to assist you in fulfilling your responsibilities and assignments as a member of the Visiting Team.

There are three distinct parts to the accreditation process. The School has completed the first part of the process. **Part one** includes the preparation of the School Profile which is a compilation of factual information about the School and the analysis of the results of an opinion survey. This survey includes participation by students who are 11 years of age or older, faculty and support staff, parents, members of the governing board. In addition the School may elect to survey former students/alumni from the School. The focus of the survey is to gather information about the strengths of the School, areas in need of improvement, different perception of the community sectors and those actions that the school has or will take to develop improvement plans based on the survey data.

Part two of the process includes the work of the self-study committee to address the standards outlined in Section B. This self-study committee has collected and examined the evidence related to learning support, language support, counseling and advisory support and health services. The members of the Visiting Team will add its comments on Part Two Section B directly on the reporting booklet completed by the self-study committee.

Part three of the process involves the development of “Strategies for Improvement.” These strategies were developed by the self-study committee and are based on the major strengths and areas for improvement as well as a comprehensive, well developed set of suggested action steps. The recommendations from the Visiting Team will be added to this list and the joint set of recommendations will form the school’s development/strategic plan for their future work. **Please refer to the Reporting Booklet Part Two –Section B.**

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 subject areas and the standards area of Teaching and Learning for the school or one of the school’s

grade-level divisions (e.g. Elementary, Secondary). 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, analysis of school wide achievement information and deliberations on the school's accreditation status.

Before the Visit

- A. Study the following materials which will give you an overview of the school:
 - 1. Community, School, Student Profiles
 - 2. Opinion Surveys
 - 3. School Guiding Statements

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

- C. Review the school's report on Teaching and Learning for your assigned division and its ratings on the standards and indicators for Teaching and Learning. Take notes on the school's self-study materials that you would like to investigate further. From these notes, write questions to ask when you meet with those who worked on the self-study reports. Review the preliminary/preparatory report. This report was submitted by the two representatives who conducted this preliminary/preparatory visit. Finally, review the Appendix for Section B located at the back of the Self-Study Booklet which includes a listing of suggested documents that could provide evidence that the school is meeting this standard. Many of these documents may be attached to the Self-Study as links or saved on electronic media for you to access. Copies of these documents will be labeled and available in the Visiting Team room.

- D. You will also meet with other groups who may not have worked on the self-study report. These groups will represent the perspectives and experiences of specific school constituencies. Sample questions based on the standards for Teaching and Learning are presented on the following pages for these groups. Based on your review of the materials provided by the school, you can begin to identify what you would like to learn from these groups, selecting important and appropriate questions from the samples or developing your own specific questions as part of your preparation.

- E. Sample questions may have more direct application to some grade levels than others. For example, questions appropriate for a secondary group may have no application for an early childhood or elementary group. It will be important for you to plan your approach accordingly.

- F. Arrive at the school prepared to discuss your preliminary findings with your colleagues on the visiting team.

- G. Consult the glossary at the end of the handbook for terms which may be unfamiliar to you.

Possible Sources of Information

Standard

- B1 Actual polices, survey responses, curriculum guides
- B2 Curriculum Guides, survey responses, discussions with staff students and parents
- B3 Curriculum Guides, classroom observations, discussions with teachers/staff and students

- B4 Staff/teachers/students/parents discussions, survey responses, Curriculum Guides
- B5 Professional Development Plans, Curriculum Guides, survey responses, teachers, students
- B6 Classroom visits, parents, teachers, students, survey responses
- B7 Management, teachers, support staff, library/media//IT, and students
- B8 Assessment data, school profile, curriculum guides, evaluation tools, Part One Information
- B9 Assessment Data, Part One, teachers/management
- B10 Survey responses, students, parents, management

Standards and Indicators on Teaching and Learning

There are distinct reports for Section B – Teaching and Learning – which the school must produce.

1. **Vertical Approach Reports by Subject Area** - The school must use the Section B Standards and Indicators to create separate vertical reports for each of the identifiable subject areas taught (e.g. Section B – Mathematics, Section B – Music – Section B – Natural Sciences, etc.). Each of these reports should cover the full range of Grades/Year-Groups in which the subject is taught. It will be the school's decision as to how many vertical reports will be needed in order to cover the full range of subject offerings. This will depend on how many can be justifiably grouped together into "subject areas". (See Appendix B for more guidelines on this topic in the "Journey to Excellence in International Education.")

The school must keep the above-mentioned collection of vertical reports on file for the eventual perusal by the Visiting Team as needed, **but these individual subject reports will not be submitted as part of the completed Section B Self-Study Report.**

4. **Vertical Summary Report** – A Section B Vertical Summary Committee must use the above-mentioned collection of vertical subject reports to create an "umbrella" vertical report using the same Section B instructions. **This vertical summary report will be submitted to the accreditation agency and members of the future Visiting Team as part of the completed Section B Self-Study Report.** The Vertical Subjects Rating Grid Found in Appendix B will help the SSC to organize and record its analysis of the separate vertical reports. This completed ratings grid **must be** submitted with the Vertical Summary Report.
5. **Horizontal Approach Reports by School Division** – Using the same set of Standards and Indicators, separate Section B reports must be created for each identifiable school division/phase. The number of these horizontal reports will reflect the school's own particular grade range and organizational structure (e.g. Section B Elementary School; Section B Middle School; Section B Secondary School etc.), and this will be the school's own decision. All horizontal reports **will be** submitted to the accreditation agency and members of the future Visiting Team as part of the completed Section B Self-Study Report.

All reports use the same standards and indicators which appear below.

In defining what students should know, understand and be able to do, the school is encouraged to emphasize both vertical and horizontal articulation within and between disciplines and across divisions of the school and to use the resources of the host country to enhance the learning experience. The academic program, while sometimes taught in discrete subjects, should be designed to identify common strands and to reinforce curriculum links so that students can make meaningful connections and build on previous work in significant ways.

Teachers' knowledge of developmental and learning style differences among students is essential to the use of a student-centered pedagogy where diverse learning and assessment strategies are evident. Appropriate in-service training will enhance the development, delivery and evaluation of the school's curriculum and its other programs.

In effective schools, student assessment is used to evaluate the strength of the curriculum, inform decisions about teaching strategies and measure student progress. Routine analysis, dissemination and use of assessment data reflect an environment where continuous improvement is valued. Based on the standards and indicators that follow, your report will detail how well the school achieves these purposes.

You are responsible for writing a report on the school's alignment with the standards on Teaching and Learning for one of the school's divisions or grade level groupings. The report must indicate the effectiveness of the curriculum in its content, design, implementation, assessment and review in reflecting the school's guiding statements.

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

SECTION B: STANDARDS & INDICATORS

STANDARD B1

The curriculum, in its content, design, implementation, assessment and review, shall reflect the school's mission, learning objectives, and policies and shall foster global citizenship and student achievement.

B1a

The school's curriculum design, teaching practices, and student learning experiences are aligned with its mission and objectives.

B1b

The school's curriculum and programs are supported by a comprehensive set of teaching and learning policies.

B1c

The formal curriculum offers an appropriate range of disciplines, including those that foster the development of global citizenship.

B1d

There is evidence of alignment between the written curriculum, the taught curriculum and student learning.

B1e

The school has a clearly articulated vision of quality learning and defined practices that support student achievement.

STANDARD B2

Students shall have access to a curriculum that provides challenge but also supports varied developmental, academic, social, physical and emotional needs and fosters the development of skills and abilities that prepare students for lifelong learning.

B2a

The effectiveness of the school's curriculum design and the varied implementation methods used, is evidenced by students being full participants in the learning process.

B2b

The curriculum design, teaching strategies, and support resources provided ensure that all students can profit from school offerings and that all students are challenged by the content of their courses.

B2c

The curriculum emphasizes the processes of gathering, organizing, presenting, and applying ideas and information as well as the mastery of content knowledge.

B2d

The curriculum provides students with opportunities to learn, develop, and apply skills in critical thinking, evaluating, interpreting, synthesizing, and problem solving.

B2e

The curriculum provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate awareness of their own learning styles.

B2f

The curriculum includes opportunities for students to acquire skills in accessing and evaluating information from print and media resources and in using the tools of technology.

STANDARD B3

Teaching and learning shall be guided by comprehensive curriculum documentation that reflects horizontal and vertical articulation as a means of providing students with meaningful connections among and between disciplines and continuity within disciplines.

B3a

Written curriculum materials specify expected learning outcomes in terms of what students should know, understand, and be able to do.

B3b

Written curriculum materials indicate content and sequence for each course/grade.

B3c

Written curriculum materials include references to the methodologies, teaching materials and resources that are used.

B3d

Written curriculum materials include references to the assessments that are used to measure student progress.

B3e

Written curriculum materials include references to links within and across disciplines.

B3f

The written curriculum describes multi-disciplinary experiences and/or activities, where appropriate, to foster authentic learning.

B3g

There is clear designation of responsibility for overseeing effective school-wide curriculum planning, design, articulation, implementation, and review.

B3h

Teachers meet with colleagues, as necessary, to strengthen vertical curriculum articulation and to ensure a logical sequence that minimizes overlap or gaps in content.

B3i

Teachers meet with colleagues, as necessary, to strengthen horizontal curriculum articulation that enhances meaning and connections for students.

STANDARD B4

Students shall benefit from a curriculum and related activities that shall be enhanced by the cultural diversity of both the host country and the school community, hence contributing to the development of global citizenship in students.

B4a

Information about the local culture and physical environment is imbedded into the curriculum and related activities to enhance student learning and contribute to the development of global citizens.

B4b

The school can cite specific examples indicating that the diversity of the school community is used to enrich the curriculum, enhance student learning and contribute to the development of global citizens.

STANDARD B5

The school shall provide ongoing professional development that improves the design, implementation, and assessment of the curriculum, reflects the needs of the faculty, and benefits student learning.

B5a

The school provides relevant professional development to assist teachers in designing curriculum and developing assessments that provide evidence of student learning.

B5b

The school provides professional development in content areas relevant to teachers' assignments.

B5c

The school provides professional development to assist teachers in improving pedagogy, for example through reference to best practices and the use of technology, in order to enhance teaching /learning and strengthen student engagement.

B5d

The faculty has an avenue for input into the planning of professional development activities.

B5e

Planning for professional development includes attention to needs that are identified through analysis of student achievement, review of school goals, and the faculty appraisal process.

STANDARD B6

Teaching practices shall reflect an understanding of the different ways in which students learn, and this is evidenced by student engagement and performance.

B6a

Teaching methods and student learning activities are varied according to the nature of the subject matter.

B6b

Teachers create stimulating learning environments that are evidenced by students who are engaged and active participants in their learning.

B6c

Teachers use varied methods, materials and technology to address individual student needs, abilities and learning styles.

B6d

Teaching methods provide appropriately for students for whom English (or other language of instruction) is not the first language.

STANDARD B7

The school shall provide appropriate support and resources to implement the curriculum and allow access and full participation by all students.

B7a

Class sizes are defined according to the subject and/or grade, student needs, and the number and qualifications of staff members present.

B7b

The school provides suitable texts, an age-appropriate library/media collection, and other print materials to support learning objectives.

B7c

Technology and media resources are up-to-date, accessible to all, and available in sufficient supply to support learning objectives.

B7d

Specialized equipment is available, up-to-date, and well maintained to support learning objectives in those areas that require it (e.g. science labs, AV/ICT, PE and Arts materials, etc.).

B7e

Assignment of teachers reflects expertise and qualifications in the appropriate subject/content area(s).

B7f

Support staff members are assigned to assist teachers in those areas where it is appropriate.

B7g

Library/media personnel are available and suitably qualified to collaborate with faculty, engage in curriculum development, and support students in acquiring and applying research skills to achieve curriculum goals.

B7h

IT personnel are available and suitably qualified to collaborate with faculty, engage in curriculum development, and support students and faculty in acquiring and applying IT skills.

STANDARD B8

The school shall have formal procedures and defined criteria to effectively and regularly assess the impact of teaching strategies and the level of student performance.

B8a

Teachers develop and implement assessments that can be used to ascertain student achievement of the desired outcomes.

B8b

Expected learner outcomes and grading standards and criteria are clearly stated and available in advance to students and parents.

B8c

Students demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment models such as formal testing, self assessment, peer review, projects, etc.

B8d

The school has processes for comparing and analyzing its students' achievements with those of similar students elsewhere.

B8e

Teachers can cite examples of the use of the results of student assessment in a formative way to effectively modify teaching and to improve learning.

STANDARD B9

Curriculum review and revisions shall be completed at periodic intervals, and changes shall reflect the school's mission, current educational practice, and the results of student assessment with the goal of enhancing student participation and performance.

B9a

Teachers, school administrators and relevant members of the support staff collaborate to develop, review and revise the curriculum on a regular basis.

B9b

The school encourages pilot curriculum innovations and exploration of new teaching strategies, monitored by appropriate assessment techniques.

B9c

There is evidence that current educational practice is considered in revising curriculum and instruction.

B9d

Curriculum revisions reflect the school's mission and objectives, and are informed by the results of student achievement.

B9e

Curriculum revisions and changes are made in the context of an overarching curriculum plan.

STANDARD B10

The school shall have formal processes for recording, analyzing, and reporting evidence of both school-wide achievement and individual student performance to parents and other appropriate members of the school community as a means of measuring success in meeting stated goals.

B10a

The school has thorough and effective systems for tracking, analyzing and reporting on school-wide and individual student performance, and for measuring success in meeting stated goals.

B10b

The school provides timely, meaningful and clearly understood information that helps parents remain advised of their child's achievements and enables them to support on-going progress.

B10c

The overall results of external tests/examination, if used, are shared with appropriate members of the school community and are analyzed to support on-going student achievement.

B10d

Data gathered from graduates or past students is considered when determining the effectiveness of the school's program.

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 Teaching and Learning and any 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?
8. Are there sufficient resources to support all aspects of teaching and learning?
9. Does the faculty have satisfactory space for collaboration and preparation?
10. Are there sufficient and appropriate instructional spaces to support Teaching and Learning?
11. Is there evidence of technology support for Teaching and Learning?

Team Orientation Meeting

On the first evening of your visit, the team chair may ask you to review the standard on Teaching and Learning 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 guiding statements, 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 additional 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 Teaching and Learning

The self-study committee developed a sense of how well the school meets CIS/NEASC standards on Teaching and Learning. The committee should be able to provide the following responses:

1. How has the school's curriculum changed in any significant ways since the self-study on Teaching and Learning was last approved?
2. Describe the process used to assure that the curriculum, from design to assessment and review, reflects the school's guiding statements.
3. How effectively does the school's curriculum meet the full range of student needs and abilities? How do you determine that?
4. Describe the process used to develop the school's professional development program. How do you determine areas of need/focus?
5. Describe the process the school uses to regularly assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning. How effective is that process? What steps has the school taken within the last two years as a result of this process?
6. What process and methods are used to record, analyze and report about the results of school and student performance? To whom is that information reported? When? How?
7. What steps could the school take for future development?

Board

The Visiting Team will meet with the board to understand its involvement in the governance of the school. This meeting may also model interviewing techniques for the visiting team. Since many team members may attend, you may not be able to ask all your questions. Based on your review of the material you have received, select the most important areas of inquiry such as:

1. How does the board assure itself that the school's curriculum meets the school's mission and reflects the school's Guiding Statements?
2. How effectively does the school's curriculum meet the full range of student needs and abilities? How do you determine that?
3. How does the board determine the allocation of financial resources to the various elements of the school's program? How does the board determine that the program is adequately supported?
4. Describe how the information about school and student performance is used in developing the school's educational and financial plans and the strategies necessary to accomplish them.
5. What steps could the school take for future development?

Parents

Meet with parents to learn their perceptions of the curriculum program. It is likely that they will not have specific knowledge of the findings of the self-study. Ask questions such as:

1. How would you describe this school's Guiding Statements?
2. What information do you receive from the school about the curriculum? How useful is that information to you in planning for your child?

3. Does your child have the necessary learning materials (texts, equipment, supplemental materials) for a good academic experience?
4. How has the faculty explained what your child should learn and how to you now about the school's grading standards?
5. How well is the school meeting your child's educational needs?
6. What steps could the school take for future development?

Teachers

Although all teachers were involved in the approval of all self-study reports, teachers may not know specifics regarding offerings in instructional areas other than their own. Try to learn their perception of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the curriculum program as well as student activities. Ask questions such as the following:

1. How adequate is the curriculum for the range of student needs and abilities in your class(es)?
2. How do you connect your curriculum/program with that of teachers in other grades/disciplines? How effective is that process?
3. How responsive has the school been to your needs for professional development? Describe any changes you have made in curriculum content or instructional approaches as a result of professional development work.
4. How does the school assess the effectiveness of teachers?
5. How do you measure your class/course/program's effectiveness? How does the school determine effectiveness?
6. What steps could the school take for future development?

Special Needs Teachers, Guidance Counselors, Language Support Staff

You may wish to meet with these staff members to discuss such curriculum issues as the varied developmental, academic, social, physical and emotional needs of students; skills and abilities which will prepare students for lifelong learning and internationalism/interculturalism; the range of curriculum approaches and teaching strategies that recognize diverse learning styles; assessment practices; collaboration and transition practices; and the like.

1. Describe the instructional resources and written curricula provided to meet the needs of special education and English language support students.
2. What processes provide students with modifications to the regular education curriculum?
3. How is the progress of students receiving specialized programs reported to parents?
4. What is the role of guidance counselors in advocating for students who are experiencing academic difficulty?
5. What steps could the school take for future development?

Head of School

As the visiting team member assigned to Teaching and Learning, you will probably meet with the head of school. You will want to learn about the school's planning processes (data collection-analysis-planning-action-evaluation), the use of school and student performance data in the development of school plans and the school head's involvement in and support of curriculum development and evaluation.

1. Describe the process used to achieve an articulated curriculum within grade level divisions and academic disciplines. How effective is that process? Who is responsible for overseeing effective curriculum planning, design and implementation?
2. Describe the process to develop the school's professional development program? How do you assess the effectiveness of the professional development efforts?
3. To what extent are teachers' instructional techniques varied and appropriate for the range of student abilities and learning styles? How do you know that?

4. How do school finances support the curriculum?
5. How do you assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning within the school?
6. How effective are student assessment data in the curriculum evaluation and review process?
7. What steps could the school take for future development?

School Curriculum Leadership Team

Meet with school management groups such as principals who report to the head of school, department heads or supervisors to provide you with detailed information about the curriculum loop (design, delivery, assessment, and review), the methods of horizontal and vertical curriculum coordination and articulation, and the levels of support for the teachers' delivery of the curriculum.

1. How well is the curriculum articulated among subjects and coordinated with other school levels?
2. How effectively does the school's curriculum meet the full range of student needs and abilities? How do you determine that?
3. Describe the school's efforts to assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning on a routine basis?
4. How do you assist teachers to be conversant with current educational thinking and pedagogical approaches?
5. How does the school define its commitment to internationalism/interculturalism for a global society.
6. What steps could the school take for future development?

Students

Meet with students to understand their knowledge of the school's curriculum. Those responsible for secondary curriculum should meet with secondary students and those responsible for middle school curriculum should meet with middle school students. Those responsible for elementary or early childhood levels of curriculum should consult the school and meet with elementary students as you and the school agree is comfortable and appropriate for such students. It is unlikely that students will have specific knowledge of the findings of the self-study. Ask questions such as the following:

1. How would you describe this school to a friend who may be considering enrolling here?
2. How challenging is the schoolwork here?
3. Do you have all of the learning materials and equipment you need in all of your classes/courses? If there are shortages, where are they?
4. How do your teachers explain expected learner outcomes and grading standards to you? Do you know exactly what you are expected to know and be able to do?
5. What steps could the school take for future development?

Classroom Visits

One of the team's responsibilities is to visit all classroom teachers. 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 Guiding Statements.
- 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.
- The ideal of globalization in an international/intercultural school setting.

Your observations and findings from interviews, meetings and classroom visits may be shared with the relevant members of the team, either in VT meetings or in writing (when appropriate).

Evaluation of School Policies and Procedures

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

- admissions and placement
- student assessment
- student records
- student achievement
- faculty professional development

Comments on specific policies and procedures may be inserted in Evidence/Additional Advice sections.

Writing the Teaching and Learning Report

Your report on Teaching and Learning will contain five steps (Standard Rating, Evidence supporting the rating, Significant Commendations, Significant Recommendations and Additional Advice) for each of the ten standards for Teaching and Learning.

VT STEP (a):

Give a rating 1, 2, 3 or 4 for this Standard.

| <i>“Does Not Meet the Standard”</i> | | <i>“Meets the Standard”</i> | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Rating 1 | Rating 2 | Rating 3 | Rating 4 |
| There is currently evidence of very little or no alignment with this Standard. | There is currently evidence of partial alignment with this Standard. Considerable work still needs to be done to come into alignment. | There is evidence of generally good alignment with this Standard. There is still some room for further development, and the school intends to address this. | There is evidence of excellent and effective alignment with this Standard. The school has embedded systems in place to ensure that alignment will be sustained. |

VT STEP (b):

Summarize in list form the evidence (given by the school and verified by the Team, or identified by the Team itself) which supports the rating the Team has given to this Standard and which may lead to any Significant Commendations, Significant Recommendations, or Additional Advice given in the steps below.

VT STEP (c):

Write Significant Commendations (if any) with respect to this Standard.

VT STEP (d):

Write Significant Recommendations (if any) for action to bring the school into better alignment with this Standard i.e. to move the school from a lower to a higher rating on the progressive scale 1 to 4.

Note – the school will be required to respond formally to these Significant Recommendations in its Two Year and Five Year Reports on Progress & Planning.

VT STEP (e):

Write Additional Advice (if any) on how the school could further develop to enhance its alignment with this Standard.

Please note: On each template, there are allotted areas for the future Visiting Team to add its comments below the Self-Study Committee's report.

PART TWO – SECTION C

HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

Governance and Leadership

INTRODUCTION

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wish to thank you for participating in an evaluation of an American/international school. The purpose of this Handbook for Evaluators is to assist you in fulfilling your responsibilities and assignments as a member of the Visiting Team.

The quality, structure, and partnership of the school's leadership, governance, and management are critical to the school's success. While the integrity and charisma of leadership cannot be mandated nor assured by accreditation standards, there are tried and tested models of effective governance and management in schools, colleges, and non-profit organizations. Those best practice principles are reflected in the following Standards and Indicators. It should be noted that the failure to live up to these governance and leadership Standards is one of the major stumbling blocks for success in international schools.

There are three distinct parts to the accreditation process. The School has completed the first part of the process. **Part one** includes the preparation of the School Profile which is a compilation of the factual information about the School and the analysis of the results of an opinion survey. This survey includes participation by students who are 11 years of age or older, faculty and support staff, parents, members of the governing board. In addition the School may elect to survey former students/alumni from the School. The focus of the survey is to gather information about the strengths of the School, areas in need of improvement, different perception of the community sectors and those actions that the school has or will take to develop improvement plans based on the survey data.

Part two of the process includes the work of the self-study committee to address the standards outlined in Section C. This self-study committee has collected and examined the evidence related to governance, leadership, management and finance. The members of the Visiting Team will add its comments on Part Two Section C directly on the reporting booklet completed by the self-study committee.

Part three of the process involves the development of "Strategies for Improvement. These strategies were developed by the self-study committee and are based on the major strengths and areas for improvement as well as a comprehensive, well developed set of suggested action steps. The recommendations from the Visiting Team will be added to this list and the joint set of recommendations will form the school's development/strategic plan for their future work. **Please refer to the Reporting Booklet Part Two - Section C.**

The standards in this section are organized around four distinct areas. These include: governance, leadership, management and finance.

Governance

There are different models of governance in international schools, and the accreditation of a particular school does not imply that the school needs to adopt a specific one. However, there are essential characteristics of governance which insure success: the organization, consistency, and constant improvement of the Governing Body; the nature and quality of the relationship between the Governing Body and the Head of School; and the leadership and development of the Head of School.

Leadership

Effective leadership provides mission and vision, organizes an institution to fulfill those goals, and inspires the constituencies to support and work with one another. Leadership leads from the front, leads from the back, collaborates, and serves.

Management

Management concerns the day-to-day operations of the school. It is essential that the daily operations be very clearly vested in the responsibility of the Head of School who should ensure they are carried out with the support of the other professional staff. Many problems have been found to arise from a Governing Body adopting a “hands-on” approach to management. While accepting that situations differ, it is nevertheless important to have a clear set of role definitions which separate governance from management while, at the same time, establishing a strong, collaborative relationship between the Governing Body and Head.

Finance

A most important and necessary component of an educational institution is a healthy financial picture and sound management of finances. Financial resources must be adequate to cover operating expenses and capable of creating an operating reserve, given the need for contingency resources in difficult times. Furthermore, Governing Bodies and schools should have medium and long term financial plans which support the school’s overall plans.

Before the Visit

When you arrive at the school, you will be consumed with Visiting Team activities almost immediately. Time will be tightly scheduled. For this reason, you are strongly advised to become familiar with all relevant documents before you arrive at the hotel and school. Every hour you spending pre-visit preparation will be invaluable to you and the Team during the Visit

Document Review

Each Visiting Team member should carefully review the complete self-study and thoroughly examine the documents related to your assigned sections, the school profile and results of the surveys. These were all prepared by the school in advance of the Team Visit. The visitors are also urged to review the Preliminary/Preparatory Report. This report was submitted by representatives of CIS and/or NEASC who conducted the Preliminary/Preparatory Visit at this school. Finally, the visitor should review the Appendix for Section C located at the back of the Self-study booklet which includes a listing of suggested documents that may provide further evidences that the school is meeting the standards of this section. Many related documents will likely be sent to you prior to the visit, and copies of all documents will be identified and available in the Visiting Team work room.

Governance & Leadership Documents

The following is a list of sources that may be useful to you in developing your interview questions and preparing your report:

- Organizational Charts
- Policy Manual, Board By-Laws
- Legal Documents re: ownership, local & national status of school
- Operations / Procedural Manual(s)
- Job Description for School Head & other positions of leadership
- Evaluative processes guidelines
- Governing Board Membership List & Data re: members
- Board Meeting Minutes
- Publications to Parents & Community for information about the school
- Tuition, Fundraising & other revenue source policies
- Strategic Planning Documents (plus Short & Long Term Planning documents)
- Evidences of Board Training and Self Evaluation
- Board Recruitment, Retention and Succession strategies
- School Calendar

SECTION C: STANDARDS & INDICATORS

Note: The term “governing body” includes any school ownership structure.

STANDARD C1

The governing body shall be so constituted, with regard to membership and organization, as to provide the school with sound direction, continuity of leadership, and effective support in the current and long term life of the school.

C1a

The governing body shapes and upholds the mission, articulates a compelling vision, and ensures that its decisions support and further the mission.

C1b

The governing body promotes strong ethical values and compliance through appropriate and effective oversight.

C1c

The governing body effectively measures the school’s success in putting its mission and objectives into practice, and it promotes corrective action if results show this is needed.

C1d

The governing body invigorates itself through planned membership, thoughtful recruitment, and inclusiveness.

C1e

The governing body provides appropriate orientation and on-going training for its members in the understanding and performance of their duties and in understanding policies and their implications.

C1f

The governing body is so constituted that it can fulfill essential governance duties and provide continuity for the school in the event of sudden change in ownership, governance, and/or administration.

STANDARD C2

There shall be a co-operative and effective working relationship between the governing body and the head of school so as to establish and sustain high morale, quality relationships, and a positive climate for teaching, learning, and student well-being throughout the school.

C2a

There is a clear and effective understanding by the governing body and the head of school of their respective functions, and these understandings are set out in written form.

C2b

There is a partnership between the governing body and head of school which recognizes that the effectiveness of the parties is interdependent.

C2c

The governing body and the head of school enjoy a positive, open, and mutually supportive relationship.

STANDARD C3

The head of school, while accountable to a higher authority, shall be the responsible leader to ensure that teaching, learning, and student well-being are supported and that the school's mission is achieved.

C3a

The governing body has developed a clear, written job description for the head of school.

C3b

The head of school provides leadership for the total school program.

C3c

The head of school sets educational priorities and outlines funding implications for submission to the governing body.

C3d

The head of school has final responsibility for the recruitment, selection, assignment, orientation, deployment and appraisal of all the administrators, teachers and support staff.

C3e

The governing body ensures that all issues pertaining to the day-to-day operations of the school are addressed through the head of school.

C3f

The head of school effectively delegates responsibility through a leadership structure that is designed to fulfill the school's mission and objectives.

STANDARD C4

The governing body shall have clearly formulated written policies and practices which are applied to bring consistency and clarity to school operations.

C4a

The governing body has a comprehensive, up-to-date, and effective policy manual for both school and governance operations.

C4b

The governing body allots sufficient time to the most important concerns and issues, and continuously engages in strategic thinking about the school's direction.

C4c

In decision-making, governing body members always put the interests of the whole school above all else, avoiding favoritism towards any individual or group.

C4d

An ethos of transparency is promoted by the governing body to ensure that appropriate members of the school's constituency have access to accurate information about decisions and matters which impact them.

C4e

Governing body policies and practices include a regular and systematic appraisal of its governance organization and effectiveness.

C4f

Governing body policies and practices include a clearly defined appraisal process for the head of school, to be conducted regularly with his/her full knowledge and to include written outcomes and provisions for discussion and appeal.

STANDARD C5

The school shall have educational and financial plans for the near and long term that ensure school viability, are supportive of the mission and are explained to the school community.

C5a

There is evidence that the short and longer-term finances of the school are sufficient to ensure it can fulfill its educational and other obligations for the foreseeable future.

C5b

The school has educational and financial plans for the short, medium and long term which are tied to the school's mission.

C5c

Financial considerations and required expertise are incorporated into the governing body's vision and plans for the school.

C5d

The school's educational and financial plans are appropriately communicated to the school community.

During the Visit

Your report will focus on the school's compliance with the standards on Governance and Leadership. These standards cover a number of important issues, such as the procedures by which the governing body is appointed or elected, its manner of conducting school business, and the leadership it exerts in guiding the school. The school head must serve as the responsible leader of the school in day-to-day matters and will be subject to evaluation by the governing body. The school must conduct itself in an ethical and legal fashion in its dealings with the school community and the public at large. School policies shall give consistency to its operations and guide all school activities.

The financial resources of the school shall be sufficient to support adequately all elements of school life and shall be administered according to the mandates of the host country. Parents shall be advised with sufficient advance notice about their financial obligations.

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

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 Governance and Leadership (Section C) 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 which pose a challenge of accessibility for students and staff?
7. Are there adequate space, facilities and equipment in the library, cafeteria, auditorium, small and large group areas and classrooms?
8. Are those in leadership positions accessible by the faculty and staff of the school?

Team Orientation Meeting

On the first evening of your visit, the team chair may ask you to review the standards on Governance and Leadership 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 in the evidence that the school has collected and the identified strategies for improving the school's operation as included in these standards. Sharing your perceptions with team members may help you identify areas for further investigation. Keep in mind that self reflection school improvement is the ultimate goal of the accreditation process.

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 supporting documentation, and to validate its conclusions as well as the strategies for improvement. 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.
- Take notes to assist you in preparing your report.
- 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 additional to add and be sure to state your willingness to meet with individuals at a later time.
- Conclude the meeting on time. Most participants will have other obligations.

Self-Study Committee on Governance and Leadership

The purpose of meeting with this self-study committee is to clarify information contained in the self-study report. Do not share your judgments or conclusions with members of this committee, but be sure to express your impressions after the meeting with other visiting team members.

During the meeting ask questions such as the following:

1. Who was involved in the work of the self-study committee? How was membership decided?
2. How is the responsibility for the direction of the school organized at the board level?
3. How would you describe the school head's role in creating policies? Where is the head's role in policy-making documented?
4. Are you aware of the school's educational and financial plans? Are others outside the Board & Administration able to access this information? How are the plans developed and reviewed?
5. Have you seen a copy of the board policy manual? Does it include statements on legal and ethical principles?
6. Do those with interest in the school have knowledge of the school's most recent financial audit? How about descriptions of school funding, budgeting procedures, and management of financial and accounting affairs?
7. How are various school constituency groups involved in decision making and budgetary processes?
8. How is leadership shared at the school? How is it developed?

Board

The governing body is the ultimate decision-making group in the school and should be knowledgeable about the school's goals and mission.

1. Can you describe the structure of the board and the manner in which members are appointed or elected?
2. What are the appraisal procedures for the school head, as well as for that of the Board?
3. How does the Board participate in current long range financial planning?
4. How are financial reports to from those charged with the day-to-day management of school funds communicated to the Board?
5. How are policy and procedure setting processes conducted? What is the level to which constituency involvement exists?
6. How does the Board communicate with staff and with parents?
7. What recommendations would you offer for future Board development?

Management/School Leadership Team

It is important to ascertain whether the board and head of school operate in a respectful, cooperative, and effective relationship. Identify and examine written policies and procedures, and determine whether there is a reasonable degree of separation in job responsibilities at each level of management.

1. Are there effective written job descriptions for each management position, including the school head? How current are they?

2. What are the channels of communication between management and the board? What degree of access does each member of management have to the board, and vice-versa?
3. Could you describe the processes for staff and personnel recruitment? Are there one or two recent circumstances where challenges have been overcome?
4. To what extent is management aware of an educational and financial plan for the short, medium, and long term?
5. To what extent is management consulted in the creation and periodic review of the educational and financial plans?
6. What recommendations would you offer to further strengthen this area in the future?

Business and Financial Management

1. School resources must be adequate to sustain a sound educational program that is consistent with its philosophy and objectives. In addition, the school must assure that those resources will be available in the future. Those who manage school finances cannot be successful without solid support from the community.
2. How often and how comprehensively are long, medium and short term financial plans reviewed and updated by the governing body and management?
3. Ask the business or financial manager to describe the budgeting process from the setting of fees to the annual external audit. In his/her view, is the process effective?
4. Could you describe for us how all items related to financial resources are carefully managed?
5. How are financial statements sent out to parents? Are all tuitions and fees being collected? If not, how is that resolved?
6. Under what circumstances is tuition debt ever forgiven? Is there is tuition remission?
7. What resources could be provided to strengthen this area in the future?

Admissions

Those who represent the school to the wider public must present it fairly and accurately. The stability of a school over time depends not only on the quality of the educational program but on reputation rather than direct experience.

1. Are the school's promotional materials current, clear and factually accurate in communicating the school to prospective parents and students?
2. How do you ensure that applicant families are fully informed of their financial obligations prior to actual enrollment?
3. What provisions might the school consider to best articulate the mission of the school in the future?

Teachers

In order to be fulfilled and motivated, teachers and other staff must share a common purpose with those who govern, manage and lead the school. Ask questions that will reveal the extent to which the teaching and management sectors are in alignment.

1. How, where, and how often are the school's primary goals clearly articulated to the staff?
2. How are teachers encouraged to engage in dialogue, both formally and informally, with representatives of the governing body and head of school?
3. How does discussion and review of mission and goals help to align teachers with those who manage and govern the school?
4. Are school resources, both human and capital, adequate to support school programs?
5. How can the school broaden the involvement of all constituent groups in the future?

Alumni and Parents

Meetings with alumni and parents can reveal valuable insights into the governance, management and leadership systems. Keep the interviews on task and avoid private airings of individual dissatisfaction.

1. Are public statements relating to programs, services, and resources clear, factually accurate and current? Are they consistent with the school's mission?
2. Do members of the governing body and management avoid conflicts of interest and comply with applicable statutes, government laws and regulations?
3. What are the available paths open to parents, alumni, and friends who wish to assist the school?
4. Does the governing body protect the school from exploitation and unjust criticism from the school community?
5. Are there ways that the school might broaden the involvement of parents and alumni in the future?

Owner

If the school is proprietary, it is important to arrange an interview with the owner. Ask questions that reveal to what extent the owner is involved in the direction of school affairs. There should be opportunities for management and staff to contribute their professional expertise to school operations.

1. What is the ownership's role in school governance and management?
2. What outside professional consultation, if any, has been sought in school operations?
3. What are the lines of authority among the owner, governing body, management and staff?
4. What recommendations would you have to expand the active involvement of the owner in the future work of the school?

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, mission and goals.

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.

Is there differentiation in instruction to meet individual students' needs?

- 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 teachers' 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.
- The involvement of both local culture and multi-cultural elements in the curriculum and in instruction.

Your observations and findings from interviews, meetings, and classroom visits may be shared with the relevant members of the team, either the VT meetings or in writing (when appropriate).

Evaluation of School Policies and Procedures

The Eighth Edition of the CIS/NEASC Main Guide to School Evaluation and Accreditation “Journey to Excellence in International Education” emphasizes specific school policies and procedures in its standards and indicators. As the team member responsible for Governance and Leadership, you will review and critique the written policies and procedures that relate to this section, including:

- appraisal of school head
- conflict of interest
- management of school funds
- long- and short-range financial plans
- contract of school head
- policy manual

Comments, questions or concerns about specific policies and procedures should be discussed with members of the Visiting Team.

Preparing the Governance and Leadership Section of the Visiting Team Report

Members of the Visiting Team will add their comments on Part Two Section C directly onto the Reporting Booklet. These comments will be displayed in blue font. Upon completion the comments of the Visiting Team will be locked in by the Team Chair.

There are five steps in this process. These steps include: rating the standard, identifying the evidence to support the rating, any significant commendations (if appropriate), any significant recommendations (if indicated), and any additional advice (if indicated).

| <i>“Does Not Meet the Standard”</i> | | <i>“Meets the Standard”</i> | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Rating 1 | Rating 2 | Rating 3 | Rating 4 |
| There is currently evidence of very little or no alignment with this Standard. | There is currently evidence of partial alignment with this Standard. Considerable work still needs to be done to come into alignment. | There is evidence of generally good alignment with this Standard. There is still some room for further development, and the school intends to address this. | There is evidence of excellent and effective alignment with this Standard. The school has embedded systems in place to ensure that alignment will be sustained. |

VT STEP (a):

The Visiting Team should then rate the school’s alignment with the Standard, using this progressive scale 1 to 4. Give a rating 1, 2, 3 or 4 for this Standard.

VT STEP (b):

Summarize in list form the evidence (given by the school and verified by the Team, or identified by the Team itself) which supports the rating the Team has given to this Standard and which may lead to any Significant Commendations, Significant Recommendations, or Additional Advice given in the steps below.

VT STEP (c):

Write Significant Commendations (if any) with respect to this Standard.

VT STEP (d):

Write Significant Recommendations (if any) for action to bring the school into better alignment with this Standard i.e. to move the school from a lower to a higher rating on the progressive scale 1 to 4.

Note – the school will be required to respond formally to these Significant Recommendations in its Two Year and Five Year Reports on Progress & Planning.

VT STEP (e):

Write Additional Advice (if any) on how the school could further develop to enhance its alignment with this Standard.

Note – the school will not need to respond formally to this Additional Advice in its Two Year and Five Year Reports on Progress & Planning.

Please note: On each template, there are allotted areas for the future Visiting Team to add its comments below the Self-Study Committee's report.

PART TWO – SECTION D

HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

Faculty and Support Staff

INTRODUCTION

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wish to thank you for joining this Visiting Team in an evaluation of an American/international school. The purpose of this Handbook for Evaluators is to assist you in fulfilling your responsibilities and assignments as a member of the Visiting Team.

There are three distinct parts to the accreditation process. The School has completed the first part of the process. **Part one** includes the preparation of the School Profile which is a compilation of factual information about the School and the analysis of the results of an opinion survey. This survey includes participation by students who are 11 years of age or older, faculty and support staff, parents, members of the governing board. In addition the School may elect to survey former students/alumni from the School. The focus of the survey is to gather information about the strengths of the School, areas in need of improvement, different perception of the community sectors and those actions that the school has or will take to develop improvement plans based on the survey data.

Part two of the process includes the work of the self-study committee to address the standards outlined in Section G. This self-study committee has collected and examined the evidence related to finance, the physical plant, health and safety issues, and auxiliary services. The members of the Visiting Team will add its comments on Part Two Section G directly on the reporting booklet completed by the self-study committee.

Part three of the process involves the development of “Strategies for Improvement.” These strategies were developed by the self-study committee and are based on the major strengths and areas for improvement as well as a comprehensive, well developed set of suggested action steps. The recommendations from the Visiting Team will be added to this list and the joint set of recommendations will form the school’s development/strategic plan for their future work. **Please refer to the Reporting Booklet Part Two - Section D.**

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. 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. Opinion Surveys
 2. Part One and Part Three of the Self-Study
 3. Part Two, Section A, School Guiding Statements
 4. Part Two Sections you have been assigned.

- B. Review the entire self-study, examining thoroughly the documents that relate to your individual assignments. Make sure you review Appendix B for Section B located in the back of the Self-Study Report. Note: Many of these documents may be attached to the Self-Study as links but when you are at the school these documents will be available to you in the Visiting Team room and the meeting room at the hotel.
- C. Take notes on the Standards and Indicators on Faculty and Support 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 handbook for terms which are unfamiliar to you.

SECTION D: STANDARDS & INDICATORS

This report must indicate how well the faculty and support staff have understood their significant role in carrying out the standards on Faculty and Support 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 faculty and support staff are 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 CIS/NEASC standards and indicators. The evaluation of will be based on the Standards which are printed below in bold letters followed by their related indicators:

STANDARD D1

The school shall have faculty and support staff that are sufficient in numbers and with the qualifications, competencies and sound character necessary to carry out the school's programs, services, and activities, to support fulfillment of the mission and objectives, and to ensure student protection and well-being.

D1a

Recruitment and screening processes are in place to ensure that employees in all categories are appropriately qualified and of sound moral character.

D1b

The teacher-student ratio reflects the size of classrooms, instructional practices, program requirements and the school's mission in order to foster personalized and meaningful learning experiences for students.

D1c

The head of school or his/her designees recruit and assign professional staff to teaching duties and other responsibilities according to their professional competence.

D1d

The head of school or his/her designees assign work loads that allow faculty and staff to be maximally effective in carrying out their teaching duties and/or other responsibilities.

D1e

There are procedures in place for reviewing regularly the alignment between personnel competencies and program needs to ensure that the school can implement programs and services in support of fulfilling the mission and objectives.

STANDARD D2

Faculty and support staff shall embrace the school's Guiding Statements and act professionally and ethically in carrying out their duties and responsibilities, inspiring excellence and students' best efforts.

D2a

Teachers utilize methods and practices which are consistent with the school's Guiding Statements and which inspire, encourage and challenge students to reach their full potential.

D2b

Faculty and staff members respect and comply with all applicable statutes, government laws and regulations and with school expectations for appropriate employee behaviour.

D2c

Teachers remain current with content and pedagogy in their areas of academic responsibility, and they maintain a high level of preparation to foster students' engagement in their learning.

D2d

Members of the faculty foster respectful interactions among and with students and with their peers, both in classrooms and about the school.

STANDARD D3

All personnel shall be employed under a written contract or employment agreement which states the principal terms of agreement between the employee and the school, and which provides for salaries and other benefits that are appropriate to the position and to the school's location.

D3a

The school provides each employee with a written contract or employment agreement in which are stated the basic facts such as salary, benefits, assignments, length of term of initial service, date during which re-employment will be decided, and conditions of termination or resignation.

D3b

The school makes clear the factors which are taken into account in determining each employee's remuneration.

D3c

Compensation is paid to employees promptly and in accordance with a predetermined schedule made known in advance of employment.

D3d

There are appropriate guarantees for the employee of job security for the term of employment, including procedures for appeals.

D3e

Compensation packages are at a level that enables the school to recruit and retain qualified and appropriately experienced staff.

STANDARD D4

Written personnel policies and guidelines shall establish expectations for the performance of faculty and support staff which shall be consistently and effectively applied.

D4a

School policies include:

- i. A statement on non-discrimination
- ii. Recruitment and hiring guidelines that include provisions such as background checks which ensure the protection of students
- iii. Procedures on recruitment, appointment, compensation and benefits, promotion and retirement
- iv. Clearly stated expectations for faculty and staff behaviour
- v. A commitment to ethical treatment and respectful interactions between faculty, support staff and their supervisors.

D4b

Personnel policies and practices are described in a handbook or manual that is up-to-date and given to all employees prior to signing a contract or employment agreement.

D4c

Policies and practices foster efficient and effective performance and enhanced morale among all employees.

STANDARD D5

There shall be a clearly defined and implemented appraisal system for faculty and support staff based on pre-determined, explicit criteria and supported by a program of professional development and/or training which is linked to appraisal outcomes and other school priorities for student learning.

D5a

The school utilizes an effective performance appraisal system for all categories of faculty and support staff.

D5b

Faculty and support staff appraisal reflects clearly stated criteria, is conducted with the full knowledge of the staff member, and is reported in writing in a document accessible only to defined individuals.

D5c

Employees have the opportunity to discuss and appeal against any aspect of the appraisal.

D5d

Appraisal processes involve the individuals in goal setting and provide opportunity for reflection and self-assessment.

D5e

The school provides a program of professional development and/or training that links to needs or agreed upon goals identified in the appraisal process and reflects other priorities identified by 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 Faculty and Support 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? Exceptional?
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 which pose a challenge of accessibility for students and staff?
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 standards on Faculty and Support 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 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 Faculty and Support Staff

The self-study committee developed a sense of how well the school meets CIS/NEASC standards on Faculty and Support 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 Faculty and Support 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 Faculty and Support 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?
10. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance the school's mission and partnerships for learning?

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?
 11. What recruitment/screening processes are in place to ensure that all employees are qualified and of sound character?
 12. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance the school's mission and partnerships for learning?

▪ **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 the staff is involved is 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?
10. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance the school's mission and partnerships for learning?
11. What recruitment/screening processes are in place to ensure that all employees are qualified and of sound character?

School Leadership Team

Meeting with leadership is necessary to understand the extent to which the school meets the standards on Faculty and Support 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?
11. 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?
12. Are department heads/lead teachers appropriately involved in decision-making? What provisions are made for management to be involved?
13. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance the school's mission and partnerships for learning?

Support Staff

The point of view of support staff is important in ascertaining the degree to which the standards on Faculty and Support 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?

6. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance the school's mission and partnerships for learning?
7. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance the school's mission and partnerships for learning?

Parents

The point of view of parents is important to understand the extent to which the school meets the standards on Faculty and Support 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?
6. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance the school's mission and partnerships for learning?

Students

The point of view of students is important to understand the extent to which the school meets the standards on Faculty and Support 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?
6. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance the school's mission and partnerships for learning?

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
- The 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.

Your observations and findings from interviews, meetings, and classroom visits may be shared with relevant members of the team, either in visiting team meetings or in writing (when appropriate).

Evaluation of School Policies and Procedures

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

- Non-discrimination
- Professional development
- Evaluation and accountability of staff
- Governing body/staff relations
- Recruitment, appointment, promotion and retirement
- Working conditions, workloads and ethical treatment
- Staff morale

Comments on specific policies and procedures should be inserted in your section on Faculty and Support Staff.

Preparing Faculty and Support Staff – Section D of the Visiting Team Report

Member of the Visiting Team will add their comments on Part Two Section D directly onto the Reporting Booklet. These comments will be displayed in blue font. Upon completion the comments of the Visiting team will be locked by the Team Chair.

There are five steps in this process. These steps include: rating the standard, identifying the evidence to support the rating, any significant commendations (if appropriate), and significant recommendation (if indicated) and any additional advice (if indicated).

| <i>“Does Not Meet the Standard”</i> | | <i>“Meets the Standard”</i> | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Rating 1 | Rating 2 | Rating 3 | Rating 4 |
| There is currently evidence of very little or no alignment with this Standard. | There is currently evidence of partial but insufficient alignment with this Standard. Considerable work still needs to be done to come into alignment. | There is evidence of generally good alignment with this Standard. There is still some room for further development, and the school intends to address this. | There is evidence of excellent and effective alignment with this Standard. The school has embedded systems in place to ensure that alignment will be sustained. |

VT STEP (a):

The Visiting Team should then rate the school’s alignment with the Standard, using this progressive scale 1 to 4. Give a rating 1, 2, 3 or 4 for this Standard.

VT STEP (b):

Summarize in list form the evidence (given by the school and verified by the Team, or identified by the Team itself) which supports the rating the Team has given to this Standard and which

may lead to any Significant Commendations, Significant Recommendations, or Additional Advice given in the steps below.

VT STEP (c):

Write Significant Commendations (if any) with respect to this Standard.

VT STEP (d):

Write Significant Recommendations (if any) for action to bring the school into better alignment with this Standard i.e. to move the school from a lower to a higher rating on the progressive scale 1 to 4.

Note – the school will be required to respond formally to these Significant Recommendations in its Two Year and Five Year Reports on Progress & Planning.

VT STEP (e):

Write Additional Advice (if any) on how the school could further develop to enhance its alignment with this Standard.

Note – the school will not need to respond formally to this Additional Advice in its Two Year and Five Year Reports on Progress & Planning.

Please note: On each template, there are allotted areas for the future Visiting Team to add its comments below the Self-Study Committee's report.

PART TWO - SECTION E

HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

Access to Teaching and Learning

INTRODUCTION

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wish to thank you for participating in an evaluation of an American/international school. The purpose of this Handbook for Evaluators is to assist you in fulfilling your responsibilities and assignments as a member of the Visiting Team.

Students' opportunities to access teaching and learning are influenced by the quality of school support programs. These programs incorporate provisions for addressing learner needs including identified learning challenges or special talents, language support, and counselling, guidance and health services. The nature and level of services should be determined by the school's Guiding Statements, the learning and well being needs of the student body, and the age range of those enrolled.

Other important and influential factors when considering the Standards in this section are the School's admissions policy and procedures. They should be effective in ensuring that students who are admitted to the School can benefit from the school's programs and services. The effectiveness of the admissions policy and procedures, and the factors mentioned above, will serve as the backdrop against which the School's ability to meet Standards in this area will be measured.

There are three distinct parts to the accreditation process. The School has completed the first part of the process. **Part one** includes the preparation of the School Profile which is a compilation of the factual information about the School and the analysis of the results of an opinion survey. This survey includes participation by students who are 11 years of age or older, faculty and support staff, parents, members of the governing board. In addition the School may elect to survey former students/alumni from the School. The focus of the survey is to gather information about the strengths of the School, areas in need of improvement, different perception of the community sectors and those actions that the school has or will take to develop improvement plans based on the survey data.

Part two of the process includes the work of the self-study committee to address the standards outlined in Section E. This self-study committee has collected and examined the evidence related to learning support, language support, counselling and advisory support and health services. The members of the Visiting Team will add its comments on Part Two Section E directly on the reporting booklet completed by the self-study committee.

Part three of the process involves the development of "Strategies for Improvement. These strategies were developed by the self-study committee and are based on the major strengths and areas for improvement as well as a comprehensive, well developed set of suggested action steps. The recommendations from the Visiting Team will be added to this list and the joint set of

recommendations will form the school's development/strategic plan for their future work. **Please refer to the Reporting Booklet Part Two – Section E.**

Before the Visit

When you arrive at the school, you will be consumed with Visiting Team activities. Time will be tightly scheduled. For this reason, you are strongly advised to become familiar with all relevant documents before you arrive at the school. Every hour that you spend in pre-visit preparation will be invaluable to you during the Team Visit.

Document Review

The visitor should carefully review the complete self-study and thoroughly examine the documents related to your assigned sections, the school profile and the results of the survey. These were all prepared by the school in preparation for the Team Visit. The visitor is also urged to review the preliminary/preparatory report. This report was submitted by the two representatives who conducted this preliminary/preparatory visit. Finally the visitor should review the Appendix for Section E located at the back of The Self-Study Booklet which includes a listing of suggested documents that could provide evidence that the school is meeting this standard. Many of these documents will be sent to you prior to the visit. Copies of all of these documents will be labelled and available in the Visiting Team room.

Learning Support Documents:

- Listing of Learning Support Services
- Copies of forms currently used by Learning Support Personnel
- Policies and admissions materials related to the admission of students with learning support needs
- Listing of personnel who provide this service and their qualifications
- Referral and assessment procedures
- Sample student schedules

Language Support Documents:

- Listing of Language Support Services
- Process for identifying students who need this support
- Listing of personnel who provide this service and their qualifications
- Information sent to parents/guardians about this service
- Evidence of how the school monitors the progress of these students

Counseling/Advisory Support:

- Any school publications that describe these services
- Forms and policies which support these services
- Listing of personnel who provide these services and their qualifications
- School orientation for new students and exit process for students who are leaving the school
- Plan for evaluating the effectiveness of these services
- Standard set of forms used by the school to maintain student records
- Forms used by the school to report student progress
- Process for referring students to outside counseling services

Health Services:

- Description of the health care services
- Listing of personnel who provide these services and their qualifications
- Schools health care policies and protocols
- Listing of local health care resources
- Copies of student handbooks and admissions information related to health services

SECTION E: STANDARDS & INDICATORS**STANDARD E1**

There shall be effective procedures for identifying the learning needs of students, both at admission and while enrolled, to ensure that students in the school can benefit from the school's programs.

E1a

As part of the admissions process, the school secures relevant diagnostic information about an individual student's abilities/learning differences/talents and learning styles to assist in determining whether the student's educational needs can be met by the school and its programs.

E1b

The learning needs of students enrolled in the school are adequately supported by clearly defined and effective referral systems and screening programs.

E1c

On-going assessment procedures monitor the extent to which any given student is benefiting from school programs, and effective procedures are used to inform school and parent decisions about continued enrollment.

STANDARD E2

Children with learning differences or specific needs who are admitted into the school shall be given support to access and enhance participation in the learning environment through appropriate and effective programs that are delivered by suitably qualified personnel.

E2a

The number, qualifications and levels of experience of learning support personnel are appropriate to the number and the needs of identified students.

E2b

The school uses student data as part of the regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the learning support program.

E2c

Personnel providing services to learning support students are clearly identified, and their roles are defined and understood by the school community.

E2d

The school makes effective use of community resources to enhance access to the curriculum for students with special learning needs.

E2e

Learning support services function as an integrated part of the school's program with learning support staff members working in collaboration with classroom teachers, students and parents to optimize student learning.

STANDARD E3

Effective language support programs shall assist learners to access the school's formal curriculum and other activities.

E3a

Students who need specialized language support to access the curriculum are provided with appropriate, clearly defined programs delivered by qualified teachers.

E3b

All staff members have received appropriate training and use pedagogical approaches which support the needs of language learners.

E3c

The school provides sufficient personnel and other resources to support student language needs.

E3d

The school encourages parents to continue development of the student's home language(s).

STANDARD E4

The school shall ensure that students have access to advice and counsel on academic, personal, career and tertiary education matters to effectively support their current and future development and achievement.

E4a

Personnel providing academic, personal, career and tertiary education advice and counsel are sufficient in number and have the appropriate experience, qualifications, character and skills to provide quality services to the school community.

E4b

Counseling and advisory programs are supported by clearly documented policies and procedures to ensure that community members understand the scope of programs as well as the manner in which to access services.

E4c

The school provides orientation for students new to the school and/or to international education as well as transition support for those students exiting the school for home or other school systems.

E4d

Counseling and advisory program records are available to those who need to use them, are adequately maintained, and are stored and backed up in a secure manner for an appropriate length of time.

E4e

The school regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its counseling/advisory programs, taking into consideration student profile and achievement data.

STANDARD E5

The school shall provide appropriate health care and promote the practices of healthy living to serve student well-being and enhance access to learning opportunities.

E5a

The school provides adequate health care services to support students on the school premises and at school sponsored activities off-site.

E5b

The school's programs, services and environment encourage the adoption of healthy life style choices.

E5c

The school facilitates for its community an awareness and understanding of local health services, local health requirements and potential health concerns.

E5d

The school assists its community in understanding and responding to potential health hazards in the local and wider community.

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 E Access to Teaching and Learning. Some of the specific areas include the instructional spaces used to provide services for students with learning challenges, students who receive language support and children with special abilities as well as the adequacy of space for counseling and guidance services and the provision of health services. 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 which pose a challenge of accessibility for students and staff?
7. Are there adequate space, facilities and equipment in the library, cafeteria, auditorium, small and large group areas and classrooms?
8. Are the health facilities adequate to meet the needs of building occupants and insure privacy?
9. Are the instructional spaces for students with learning challenges and special needs adequate?
10. Are spaces for guidance and counselling services adequate and private?

Team Orientation Meeting

On the first evening of your visit, the team chair may ask you to review the standards on Access to Teaching and Learning with the rest of the committee. If so, be prepared to give your initial perceptions, based on your reading of the school profile, the analysis of the opinion surveys and the self-study and your observations of the school's adherence to the standards as reflected in the evidence that the school has collected and the identified strategies for improving the delivery of services included in these standards. Sharing your perceptions with team members may help you identify areas for further investigation. Keep in mind that self reflection and school improvement is the ultimate goal of the accreditation process.

Meetings with Committees and Groups

During the team visit you will meet with members of the school community to verify facts presented in the school's self-study and validate its conclusions as well as the strategies for improvement. 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.
- Take notes to assist you in preparing your report.
- 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 additional to add and be sure to state your willingness to meet with individuals at a later time.
- Conclude the meeting on time. Most participants will have other obligations.

Self-Study Committee on Access to Teaching and Learning

The purpose of the meeting with the self-study committee is to clarify information contained in the self-study report. Do not share your judgments or conclusions with the members of the self-study committee, but be certain to confirm your impressions with the other members of the visiting team. During the meeting ask questions such as the following:

1. Have the services for students with academic challenges, special abilities, changed in any significant ways since the self-study was last approved? Please explain.
2. Does the listing of special needs services represent a complete and accurate account of those which are currently available?
3. Are the services adequate to meet students' special needs?
4. Does the description of the English Language Support accurately reflect current services that are available at the school?
5. How are parents and guardians informed about these services?
6. How are written student health policies and procedures distributed to parents and guardians?
7. Are the health policies and procedures adequate?
8. Do health forms provide the information needed to make informed decisions about students' medical needs?
9. How is student progress in guidance and counseling reported to parents and guardians?
10. Describe the process used to refer a student for counseling.
11. Do college acceptances meet the expectations of the parents?
12. Are those community resources listed for health and counseling services current?
13. Which services does the school use most frequently?

Special Needs Staff

Special needs personnel have direct contact with students and should be able to offer information regarding profile(s) of those students with special needs and the school's success in meeting their needs. The questions should address the success of the school in serving

students who are experiencing academic difficulty. Special needs personnel may provide services to students with learning disabilities, academic talents as well as those students who do not speak English as their primary language. During the interview ask questions such as:

1. How do admissions materials match the profiles of those students with special needs?
2. Describe the diagnostic information that the school obtains during the admissions process to insure that the learning needs of the student can be met by the school and its programs.
3. Describe the process used to refer students with academic difficulty for a diagnostic evaluation?
4. Describe how the roles of the personnel who provide support services are identified and made known to the school community.
5. What is the role of the parent or guardian in the special education referral process?
6. Describe the instructional resources and written curricula provided to meet the needs of special education students.
7. What input do you have with respect to the budget for the special education program?
8. What processes provide students with modifications to the regular education curriculum?
9. Describe the process to insure that regular education and special education staffs have sufficient time for common planning and/or consultation as well as communicating with parents.
10. Does the current number of special needs faculty meet the needs of the student population? Describe the qualifications and levels of experience of these personnel.
11. How does the school make use of community resources to enhance access to the curriculum for students with learning needs?
12. Describe how the school utilizes student assessment data to conduct an ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the learning support program.
13. Discuss the strategies for improvement that you would recommend to further enhance these services.

Language Support Services

Language support personnel provide services to support student access to the curriculum through the language of instruction. These members of the staff also provide a process whereby students in need of language support services are identified and a process to determine that students are prepared to exit this support program. During the interview ask questions such as:

1. Describe how the current program enables students to access the curriculum.
2. Please describe the current range of services and the components of the program?
3. Are all personnel who provide language support services well qualified?
4. What types of in-service training opportunities are provide to support all members of the faculty in meeting the needs of students who require language support?
5. Is the current number of language support personnel adequate to full support the number of students who require language support?
6. What additional resources are available to meet the need of these students?
7. How does the school encourage parents and guardians to continue the development of the student's home language?
8. How do the current services align with the information in the admissions materials
9. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance this program?

Guidance Staff

Guidance counselors and advisory program personnel have direct contact with students. They can provide the team with important information about the guidance services at the school and the post secondary planning process. They can also outline the strengths and the weaknesses of the guidance services and the advisory program and comment on any changes in these services since the publication of the self-study. They can also discuss any strategies for improvement that have been identified. During the interview ask questions such as:

1. Describe the primary functions of the guidance and advisory program personnel.
2. Describe the duties and responsibilities of the guidance and advisory program personnel.
3. Are these functions and tasks consistent with the information in the admissions materials?
4. Identify the ratio of counselors and advisory program personnel to students. Does your caseload or student group size allow you to serve the school community? What formal interactions do guidance counselors and advisory program personnel have with parents each year?
5. Describe the process and/or approach used by guidance counselors to assist students in college/career planning and providing academic advice.
6. What records do guidance counselors and advisory program personnel maintain for each student and how are these records stored, maintained and accessed by those who need them?
7. What is the role of guidance counselors in advocating for students who are experiencing academic difficulty?
8. Discuss the range of standardized tests available to students in seeking admission to institutions of higher learning and the role of the guidance counselor in scheduling these assessments.
9. Provide some examples of how school leaders and teachers support the social-emotional well-being of the students.
10. Identify those policies and procedures that ensure that the community members understand the guidance counseling and advisory programs and the process for accessing these programs.
11. Describe the orientation program for new students and the transition plan for those students who are leaving the school.
12. Describe the process that you use to evaluate the effectiveness of the guidance counselling and advisory programs particularly in relation to the student profile and the results of achievement data.
13. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance these services?

Health Services Staff

Health personnel may include nurses, physicians and health aides. These individuals can describe the current range of services and the strengths and weaknesses of these services. Health personnel can also discuss the protocols and procedures used in responding to general and emergency health situations. During the interview ask questions such as:

1. Describe the roles and responsibilities of each member of the health department.
2. How are parents informed about the school requirements for health records and an understanding of the local health requirements?
3. What training is provided for teachers and other staff concerning responses to emergencies in school or at off-campus school events?

4. How does the school assist all members of the school community in understanding and responding to potential health hazards in the immediate and broader community?
5. Do current policies and procedures and services adequately address the health and safety needs of the students on campus and during off-site activities?
6. How are these policies and procedures made known to parents and staff?
7. Describe the school's safeguards to insure confidentiality of student information.
8. Are current health facilities adequate to support the instructional program?
9. What community resources are available to support school health services?
10. What process does the school use to record and monitor student health records in accordance with local health requirements?
11. Describe those programs, services and elements within the school environment which promote the adoption of healthy life style choices.
12. Describe the process for the ongoing evaluation of these services.
13. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance these services?

Parents

Every effort should be made to meet with parents/guardians to learn their perspective regarding the access to teaching and learning services. The meeting can also inform the team if the support services that are provided are consistent with the services as outlined in the school materials. During the interview ask questions such as:

1. Describe how the school assists students who are experiencing academic difficulty. Is this support affording your student the opportunity to take full advantage of the school program?
2. Does the school's program of study match that which is outlined in the admissions materials?
3. Describe the school orientation process and the role of parents in this process.
4. Describe the process used by the school to secure diagnostic information about your student during the admissions process.
5. What resources does the school provide to support unique talents and abilities of the students?
6. How does the school encourage parents to continue to develop home language skills?
7. How does the school inform parents about student academic progress and performance on standardized tests and other forms of assessment?
8. Describe the frequency and type of communication you have with the guidance counselors.
9. How does the school involve parents in the process of academic and personal counseling and post secondary planning?
10. Describe the school's advisory program and the effectiveness of this program.
11. How were you informed about school health requirements and emergency procedures?
12. What recommendations would you offer to improve guidance, special needs, and language support and student health services?

Students

Students are the beneficiaries of access to teaching and learning services. Students may not be familiar with the information on the school profile, the results of the self-study, the strategies for improvement or the protocols and procedures. Students can, however, give their perception of these services. During the interview ask questions such as:

1. How do students who are having academic problems obtain extra help?

2. Does the school provide enough teachers to support students with special needs and the need for language support?
3. How did the school measure your learning abilities and needs during the admissions process?
4. Describe the student orientation program.
5. What community resources are available to you?
6. How often do you meet with your guidance counselor?
7. What help is available to students who are experiencing social and emotional problems?
8. What services are provided to students through the health office?
9. What changes would you suggest to improve the learning and language support, the guidance department or the health services?

Classroom Visits

One of the team's responsibilities is to visit classrooms. 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.

Your observations and findings from interviews, meetings and classroom visits may be shared with the relevant member of the team either in VT meetings or in writing (when applicable).

Evaluation of School Policies and Procedures

The Eighth Edition of the CIS/NEASC Main Guide to School Evaluation and Accreditation "Journey to Excellence in International Education" emphasizes specific school policies and procedures in its standards and indicators. As the team member responsible for Access to Teaching and Learning, you will review and critique the written policies and procedures that relate to this section, including:

- procedures for identifying the learning needs of students, both at admission and thereafter
- health policies, including collection of medical information for all staff and students, immunization against common diseases and the maintenance of comprehensive records.
- procedures for meeting the needs of students who require language support services

Comments on specific policies and procedures should be discussed with the members of the Visiting Team.

Preparing the Access to Teaching and Learning Section of the Visiting Team Report

Members of the Visiting Team will add their comments on Part Two Section E directly onto the Reporting Booklet. These comments will be displayed in blue font. Upon completion the comments of the Visiting team will be locked by the Team Chair.

There are five steps in this process. These steps include: rating the standard, identifying the evidence to support the rating, any significant commendations (if appropriate), and any significant recommendations (if indicated) and any additional advice (if indicated).

VT STEP (a):

Give a rating 1, 2, 3 or 4 for this Standard.

| <i>"Does Not Meet the Standard"</i> | | <i>"Meets the Standard"</i> | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Rating 1 | Rating 2 | Rating 3 | Rating 4 |
| There is currently evidence of very little or no alignment with this Standard. | There is currently evidence of partial but insufficient alignment with this Standard. Considerable work still needs to be done to come into alignment. | There is evidence of generally good alignment with this Standard. There is still some room for further development, and the school intends to address this. | There is evidence of excellent and effective alignment with this Standard. The school has embedded systems in place to ensure that alignment will be sustained. |

VT STEP (b):

Summarize in list form the evidence (given by the school and verified by the Team, or identified by the Team itself) which supports the rating the Team has given to this Standard and which may lead to any Significant Commendations, Significant Recommendations, or Additional Advice given in the steps below.

VT STEP (c):

Write Significant Commendations (if any) with respect to this Standard.

VT STEP (d):

Write Significant Recommendations (if any) for action to bring the school into better alignment with this Standard i.e. to move the school from a lower to a higher rating on the progressive scale 1 to 4.

Note – the school will be required to respond formally to these Significant Recommendations in its Two Year and Five Year Reports on Progress & Planning.

VT STEP (e):

Write Additional Advice (if any) on how the school could further develop to enhance its alignment with this Standard.

Please note: On each template, there are allotted areas for the future Visiting Team to add its comments below the Self-Study Committee's report.

PART TWO – SECTION F

HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

School Culture & Partnerships for Learning

INTRODUCTION

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wish to thank you for participating in an evaluation of an American/international school. The purpose of this Handbook for Evaluators is to assist you in fulfilling your responsibilities and assignments as a member of the Visiting Team.

A positive school culture and the existence of supportive networks within the local and greater community can have a beneficial impact on the learning environment. This section examines the quality of external and internal community relationships, parent partnerships, communication systems and channels, extra-curricular, co-curricular and boarding programs, and the development of global mindedness in students.

In measuring the school against the standards on School Culture and Partnerships for Learning it will also be important to remain mindful of the school's Guiding Statements, the age range of the students, the influence of the local context and culture, the demographic makeup of the student community, and student participation and achievements in extra curricular activities.

There are three distinct parts to the accreditation process. The School has completed the first part of the process. **Part one** includes the preparation of the School Profile which is a compilation of factual information about the School and the analysis of the results of an opinion survey. This survey includes participation by students who are 11 years of age or older, faculty and support staff, parents, members of the governing board. In addition the School may elect to survey former students/alumni from the School. The focus of the survey is to gather information about the strengths of the School, areas in need of improvement, different perception of the community sectors and those actions that the school has or will take to develop improvement plans based on the survey data.

Part two of the process includes the work of the self-study committee to address the standards outlined in Section F. This self-study committee has collected and examined the evidence related to the school's admission policies, school climate, communication, school publications, student activities, community linkages, student population, and boarding school policies and procedure if appropriate. The members of the Visiting Team will add its/their comments on Part Two Section F directly on the reporting booklet completed by the self-study committee.

Part three of the process involves the development of "Strategies for Improvement". These strategies were developed by the self-study committee and are based on the major strengths and areas for improvement as well as a comprehensive, well developed set of suggested action steps. The recommendations from the Visiting Team will be added to this list and the joint set of recommendations will form the school's development/strategic plan for their future work. **Please refer to the Reporting Booklet Part Two - Section F.**

Before the visit

When you arrive at the school, you will be consumed with Visiting Team activities. Time will be tightly scheduled. For this reason, you are strongly advised to become familiar with all relevant documents before you arrive at the school. Every hour that you spend in pre-visit preparation will be invaluable to you during the Team Visit.

Document Review

The visitor should review the full self-study, carefully examining thoroughly the documents that relate to your individual assignments, the school profile and the results of the survey. These were all prepared by the school in preparation for the Team Visit. The visitor is also urged to review the preliminary/preparatory report. This report was submitted by representatives from CIS and/or NEASC who conducted the preliminary/preparatory visit. This report can provide a lens for where the school was 1-2 years ago (strengths and areas for improvement) compared to the school's current status as reported in the self-study report. Finally the visitor should review the Appendix for Section F located in the back of the Self Study Booklet which includes a listing of suggested documents that could provide evidence that the school is meeting this standard. Many of these documents will be sent to you prior to the visit. You may find that copies of these documents will be labelled and available in the Visiting Team room. Following are lists of sources that may assist you in clarifying questions you may have:

Policy Documents:

- Policies and admissions materials especially those related to student demographics (SPED, ESL or ELL, race, and ethnicity)
- Boarding Section: Guiding Statement
- Boarding Section: Policy Manual
- Boarding Section: Operations/Procedures Manual
- Boarding Section: Policy and Procedural Manual for students boarded with external providers
- School's Counseling Policy

School Climate Documents:

- Plan for evaluating and determining the effectiveness of the school's climate
- Evidence of the school having evaluated and assessed the effectiveness of the school's climate
- Student Handbooks
- Faculty/Staff Handbook
- Residential Supervisory Staff Manual

School Communication Documents:

- A list and/or samples (electronic and non-electronic) of documents relating to how school communicates between members of the school community including: faculty and staff, students, parents, external community, and alumni
- Listing of people and their specific responsibilities related to school communications

School and Community Partnerships:

- Examples of roles parents play in supporting home school partnerships
- Listing of local business partnerships
- Listing of internships/community service learning opportunities and projects

Student Extra-curricular/Co-curricular Activities:

- Listing of student activity advisors
- Listing of student activities by level and day
- Listing of boarding school student activities (weekends)

SECTION F: STANDARDS & INDICATORS

STANDARD F1

A school climate characterized by fairness, trust, and mutual respect shall support student learning and well-being.

F1a

A culture of shared responsibility for the social and emotional well-being and protection of students is promoted by the school leadership and teachers through programmes to address awareness, prevention and responsiveness to issues such as child abuse, sexual harassment, substance abuse, hazing and bullying, and discrimination in any form.

F1b

The school has policies, procedures, and practices that promote and address the physical, emotional, and social well-being of students and staff.

F1c

School community members demonstrate an understanding of and appreciation for diversity, thereby supporting a climate of mutual respect.

F1d

Fairness in dealing with student concerns is enhanced by clearly written statements of expected behaviour, the consequences of non-compliance, and a mechanism for appeal.

F1e

The school celebrates students' efforts and achievements in meaningful and culturally sensitive ways.

F1f

Student, staff and parent information is treated with an appropriate degree of confidentiality.

STANDARD F2

Effective communication processes shall foster a productive home-school partnership and a positive learning community.

F2a

Effective, formal processes are in place to facilitate a flow of information and a meaningful interchange of opinions among all sectors of the school community.

F2b

A "whole-school" climate and a positive learning community are fostered by effective horizontal and vertical communication among the various sections of the school.

F2c

The school engages students and parents in creating a collaborative culture based on a shared vision, shared responsibility and a sense of belonging.

F2d

Opportunities are provided for parents to learn about the school's educational aims, programmes, and pedagogical approaches so that they can support student learning.

F2e

The school creates student learning opportunities by effectively using the skills of its own community members and by building partnerships with external agencies such as local businesses and professional organizations.

STANDARD F3

The school shall offer effective programmes and activities which complement the formal curriculum in supporting the school's Guiding Statements.

F3a

The development and delivery of the school's complementary programmes demonstrate sensitivity to the needs and beliefs of different cultures, foster engagement with the local culture and promote global citizenship.

F3b

The school actively supports the development of student leadership and encourages students to undertake service learning.

F3c

The school actively promotes and models global environmental awareness and responsibility across its community.

F3d

The school regularly evaluates its complementary programmes to ensure they remain aligned with its Guiding Statements, meet student needs and interests, and foster global citizenship.

STANDARD F4 (For Boarding Schools)

Boarding services effectively support the school's Guiding Statements, and serve the well-being of all boarding students and staff.

F4a

A clear boarding educational philosophy is in place which creates a twenty- four hour, seven day a week learning environment.

F4b

Sound, clear and effectively implemented operating procedures and systems are in place which support boarding life and provide guidelines for addressing fire, accidents, natural disasters, civil unrest, medical and any other emergencies.

F4c

The boarding programme is supported by written policies and effective record keeping which enhance the well-being of students.

F4d

Boarding staff have appropriate training and orientation for the role they play and have been effectively screened prior to appointment to ensure that they have the necessary skills and sound character to provide a supportive, safe, caring and nurturing environment.

F4e

Boarding staff members are adequately deployed to provide boarding students with a safe environment and open, positive and nurturing teacher/student relationships.

F4f

The boarding facilities effectively reflect the school's Guiding Statements and support the well-being of students and staff in the following areas:

- i. The number and needs of the boarding students.
- ii. The number and needs of the boarding staff.
- iii. The range of formal and informal activities.
- iv. The delivery of important services (laundry, meals, medical support, transport, technology etc.)
- v. The integration of day and boarding students

F4g

The boarding facilities meet local authority safety standards and any reasonable stipulations which may be required by the accrediting agency/agencies.

F4h

The culture within the boarding program demonstrates sensitivity to and respect for the diversity of the student body as well as a sense of home and family.

F4i

Effective channels of communication are in place between the school, boarding staff and the home to ensure that parents, teachers and residential staff work in partnership to support boarding students.

F4j

Schools with students that are privately boarded, and/or for whom the school has legal responsibility, support their well-being through clear written expectations for the students and their guardians and by active monitoring.

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 School Culture and Partnerships for Learning. Some of the specific areas include the instructional space, the type and amount of space allocated for displaying student work, display cases and bulletin boards in hallways, common areas and the library-media centers, auditorium (seating capacity, theater production facilities etc.), athletic fields(type and condition), art classrooms (storage and display spaces),dance studio, music rooms(location, sound proofing and number), dedicated club rooms(yearbook, newspaper, etc.), evidence of a recycling program.

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 that could disrupt classes or other school activities?
6. Are there areas of the school which pose a challenge of accessibility for students and staff?
7. Are there adequate space, facilities and equipment in the library, cafeteria, auditorium, small and large group areas and classrooms?
8. Do the facilities support the display and celebration of student achievements (bulletin boards, display cases, trophy cases, message boards and athletic banners)?
9. Are the athletic facilities and fields in good condition and adequate to support the extra-curricular activities
10. Is there evidence of technology resources available to support educational programs?
11. Boarding schools:
 - Health and Safety Issues- including handicapped accessibility
 - Dining facilities/ arrangements-including evenings and weekend
 - Living arrangements and storage facilities for boarders
 - Personal hygiene facilities
 - Technology resources in residence halls

Team Orientation Meeting

On the first evening of your visit, the team chair may ask you to review the standards on School Culture and Partnerships for Learning with the rest of the committee. If so, be prepared to give your initial perceptions, based on your reading of the school profile, the analysis of the opinion surveys, the self-study and your observations of the school's adherence to the standards as reflected in the evidence that the school has collected and the identified strategies for improving the delivery of services included in these standards. Sharing your perceptions with team members may help you identify areas for further investigation. Keep in mind that self-reflection and school improvement is the ultimate goal of the evaluation

Meetings with Committees and Groups

During the Team Visit you will meet with members of the school community to verify facts presented in the school's self-study and validate its conclusions as well as the strategies for improvement. 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.
- Take notes to assist you in preparing your report.
- 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 additional to add and be sure to state your willingness to meet with individuals at a later time.
- Conclude the meeting on time. Most participants will have other obligations.

Self-Study Committee on School Culture & Partnerships for Learning

The purpose of the meeting with the self-study committee is to clarify information contained in the self-study report. Do not share your judgments or conclusions with the members of the self-study committee, but be certain to confirm your impressions with the other members of the visiting team. During the meeting ask questions such as the following:

1. Describe how the school helps students and parents to understand the school's Guiding Statements?

2. How would you characterize the school's climate? Have there been any significant changes in climate in the last few years.
3. Describe the process used to evaluate the school's climate.
4. How would you characterize the learning environment? Does the student behavior policy support a positive learning environment?
5. Has school climate changed in any significant ways since the self-study section on School Culture & Partnerships for Learning was last approved?
6. Do students believe that school administration treats them fairly and respectfully?
7. How often do administration and faculty meet with students to share information and ideas about school matters? Have these meetings been helpful?
8. What published documents about policies, courses, and other school matters has the school made available to parents/guardians? Are they distributed electronically or in printed copy?
9. Do parents/guardians and students have any role in developing these publications? Please explain.
10. How often are parents/guardians and students invited to discuss important decisions and to offer their opinions, particularly about curricular and extra-curricular programs?
11. How does the staff ensure that the student activities program meets the interests of the students?
12. How does the school promote internationalism/ inter-culturalism and global awareness?
13. How does the school include the cultural and social opportunities available in the host country into the student activities program?
14. What programs and/or policies does the school promote to ensure that each student will maintain a respectful attitude toward persons of other cultural, linguistic, and national backgrounds?
15. How does the school develop and support student leadership opportunities?
16. How does the school develop and support community partnerships for learning?
17. Is the admissions procedure for enrolling boarding students thorough and accurate so that appropriate matches are being made between the boarding students and the school?
18. How is the program for the boarding school component developed? Who has a voice in the development of the program? Are there current, important issues in the boarding component?
19. What is the level or rate of participation in the weekend cultural and sports programs among boarding students?
20. Is there a boarding student advisory council? Who is on the council? Do students have representation on the council? How frequently does the council meet? What types of issues are discussed?
21. Describe the orientation and training programs for dormitory parents. What is the duration? When and where are these programs offered?
22. How does the boarding program promote the international mission of the school?
23. What strategies for improvement would you recommend to further enhance school climate and partnerships for learning?

Teachers

Meeting with teachers will provide you an opportunity to determine to what extent the curricular and extra-curricular programs meet the expressed needs of students and their parents. It should also provide you an opportunity to determine the degree of participation of the school family in shaping student and community life. Ask questions such as the following:

1. What is your assessment of student morale and how have you arrived at that judgment?

2. Does the student activities program help to support or advance the school's philosophy and objectives? How does it do that?
3. What role do you think the parents should play in the life of the school? To what extent do parents play that role and how do you determine that?
4. How do you determine whether students perceive that school rules are consistently and fairly enforced?
5. How does the professional staff participate in and support the student activities program?
6. How does the school ensure that students have opportunities to extend learning beyond the classroom? What kinds of programs have you been involved in?
7. Have you been involved in school projects with teachers from other countries, such as school visits, exchanges, or professional development activities?
8. What changes if any would you like to see in the student activities program? How would these changes benefit the quality of student life?
9. Is there a written and understood program or curriculum for the boarding school component?
10. What changes if any would you suggest to make the school better for all students?

Students

Students are the beneficiaries of positive school culture and partnerships for learning. Your meeting with them may be the most productive for evaluating the adequacy of the school's response to the standards on school culture and partnerships for learning. Students may not be familiar with the information on the school profile, the results of the self-study, the strategies for improvement or the protocols and procedures. Students can, however, give their perception of the school's culture and partnerships for learning. Make sure you meet with students from all levels and who reflect the general social and cultural make-up of the student body. If the school has a boarding program be sure to meet with a representative group of these students. During the interview(s) ask questions such as:

1. What do your school's philosophy, mission and/or vision statements mean to you? Were students involved in developing or reviewing the current philosophy? Do you feel the school lives up to its mission?
2. How long have you been a student at this school? What are some of the best things you like about the school? Are there things that you would like to see changed?
3. What does the faculty do to make classes interesting and motivate you to learn? Please give some examples. Do students feel comfortable expressing alternative points of view?
4. Do the school administration and faculty treat students fairly and with respect? Are students respectful of each other?
5. Do you feel safe at this school? Why or why not?
6. Does the school have a bullying policy? Do you know anyone who has been bullied at school? If you were being bullied by someone at school is there someone in the school community who you would go to for help?
7. Does the school sponsor field trips? Are they connected to what you were studying? Do they help you understand or further clarify what you were studying?
8. What would you tell prospective students about this school that might affect their decision to enroll?
9. How does the school celebrate the host countries cultural heritage? What programs and/or policies does the school promote to ensure that students will maintain a respectful attitude toward persons of other cultural, linguistic, or national backgrounds?
10. Are there classes or times when students talk about global issues such as class, race, poverty, the environment or world peace? Are there clubs or after school activities that support these causes or issues?

11. In what ways does the school provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills?
12. Do most students participate in the after school activities program? Do you think there are enough activities? If you or your friends wanted to add an additional activity, sport or an event how would you go about doing it?
13. Is there a student government? Does each level have its own student government? What is the role of student government in the school? Are there certain kinds of events or programs that are the responsibility of student government? Are there officers? Is there a faculty advisor?
14. Does the school have programs where students go out into the community to give service or spend time learning new skills from community members? Please explain.
15. If you are a boarding school do boarding students have a separate student governing board?
16. Do you have input into the boarding school life, facilities, and program? If so, how and when?
17. Explain the relationship between the boarding and day students. Is there a separate student council for boarding students?
18. What changes if any would you suggest to make the school better for all students?

Parents/Guardians

Every effort should be made to meet with parents/guardians to learn their perspective of the school culture and partnerships in learning. During the interview ask questions such as:

1. How does the school help you to understand its Guiding Statements? Do you feel the school lives up to its mission?
2. How would you describe the schools climate? Do you feel the culture of the school enhances and supports your student's opportunities to learn and be successful? Have you observed any changes in the climate of the school?
3. Has your child had a positive experience at this school?
4. How frequently does the school administration and staff meet with parents /guardians to share information and ideas about school matters? Have these meeting been helpful?
5. Do you feel that the level of communication between the school and home is adequate? What strategies for improving communication if any would you suggest? Would you prefer the school communicate with you electronically, by phone and/or hard copy?
6. Describe the ways in which the school has included parents/guardians in the discussion and development of school policies?
7. Have you been asked to share your expertise with students on campus or have you provided opportunities for students to come to your place of business to provide students with alternative or additional learning opportunities?
8. How does this school promote and support the local culture and global citizenship?
9. Do you think the school adequately addresses and models environmental awareness and responsibilities?
10. Does the school have a Parent Teacher Association/organization? How frequently do they meet?
11. Are you asked for input into of the boarding school life, facilities, and program? If so, how and when?
12. What changes if any would you suggest to make the school better for all students?

Residential Staff

The residential staff serves an important link between the boarding students and the school. These staff members also have the opportunity to assess the climate of the school from the boarding students perspective. It will be helpful if during your visit you are able to schedule a meeting with the residential staff to seek their input. During the interview ask questions such as:

1. Describe the type of training you received from the school regarding your duties and responsibilities prior to becoming a residential life supervisor at this school? Were you provided with a manual outlining your role and available resources?
2. Describe the counseling services that are available for boarding students. Are these services available evenings and weekends?
3. Describe the availability of health services for the boarding students in the evenings and weekends?
4. What are your greatest challenges as a residential life supervisor? Describe the kinds of support available to you from the school community when dealing with problematic issues?
5. Describe the activity program provided by the school for boarding students on weekends?
6. What is the level of or rate of participation in the weekend cultural and sports programs among boarding students?
7. Is there a forum where boarding students may provide input or express concern with residential issues?
8. Is there a boarding student advisory council? Who is on the council? Do students have representation on the council? How frequently does the council meet? What types of issues are discussed?
9. Describe your duties and the procedures you follow when there is an emergency evacuation of the residence hall? How frequently are these drills held?
10. Who has the responsibility to communicate with the parents of boarding students who are having school related issues?
11. Are your responsibilities and role different than what was originally described to you when hired? Please explain.
12. Is there a separate dining facility for boarding students and are boarding students served the same meals as day students?
13. Are all boarding students housed on campus? If no who is responsible for their supervision and well being?
14. What changes if any would you suggest to make the residential life better for boarding students?

Administration and the Board

Meet with administrative personnel who have particular responsibilities for School Culture and Partnerships for Learning. Try to determine the adequacy of their support for programs that contribute to an enrichment of student wellbeing. Your meeting with them will enable you also to determine their receptivity to the participation of staff, parents, and students in shaping policies for these programs. Talk with board members to ascertain their commitment to the maintenance of high school morale. During the interviews ask questions such as:

1. Is the budget for school activities sufficient to meet school objectives and student needs? Please explain.
2. Are the parents satisfied with the student activities program? Please explain.
3. Are parents and students sufficiently informed about the role and function of the student activities program in the life of the school? How do you assess that?
4. How does the school community relate and contribute to the life of the school?
5. Do the rules governing student conduct provide for a favorable school climate? Please explain.
6. Describe how the school has used assessment data to improve the climate of the school?
7. Does the student activities program provide a variety of experiences to meet the needs of all students? How and how often does the school assess the breadth of program offerings?
8. What process does the school use to ensure that all candidates for boarding supervisory positions are effectively screened?
9. What is the school's philosophy for having a boarding component? How and when and why was that philosophy developed?
10. What are the plusses and minuses of having a boarding school component?

Counselors - Pastoral, Boarding, Guidance, College, Career

Meet with persons who provide advice and counsel to students. Often, these persons have a unique insight into the nature of school climate and student well-being, as well as the policies and programs that contribute to it. Ask questions such as the following:

1. What is your assessment of the climate of the school? What are the contributing or negative factors?
2. How does the participation of parents contribute to the quality of student life?
3. Do you wish the parents were more involved in the life of the school? Why? What are some ways in which the school could strengthen this partnership?
4. What kinds of feedback about the nature and quality of students' experiences and education does the school solicit?
5. Does that feedback result in revisions in policy, operations, program, and activities or reinforce them? Please explain.
6. What are your responsibilities for providing support to boarding students? How are services provided to boarding students on nights and weekends?
7. Do boarding school students have unique or special problems/issues with which you have to deal?
8. What changes if any would you suggest to make the school better for all students?

Medical Staff -Physician, Nurse (Boarding Schools)

1. The medical staff provides support services to the school and plays an important role in school climate. It is important that you interview them as their perspectives will be helpful to you in evaluating school climate and student wellbeing. Some suggested questions:
2. What are your assessments of school climate and student wellbeing and how have you arrived at that judgment?
3. What are the characteristics of this school that would recommend it to prospective students? What benefits would a student receive by attending this school?
4. Do you have sufficient opportunities to express your opinions about school policies, particularly about matters that affect school climate and student wellbeing?
5. How often have you been consulted by school administration about these issues?
6. What is your role in providing medical services to boarding students on nights and weekends?

7. What changes if any would you suggest to make the school better for all students?

Support Personnel -Clerical, Maintenance, Food Service Staff

Many persons provide support services to the school and play an important role in school climate. Try to interview some of them because they can be very helpful to you in evaluating school climate and student wellbeing. Some suggested questions are:

1. What are your assessments of school climate and student wellbeing and what are the factors contributing to those assessments?
2. What are the characteristics of this school that would recommend it to prospective students? What benefits would a student receive by attending this school?
3. Do you have sufficient opportunities to express your opinions about school policies, particularly about matters that affect school climate and student wellbeing?
4. How often have you been consulted by school administration about these issues?
5. What changes if any would you suggest to make the school better for all students?

Alumni (if available)

1. What are your assessments of school climate and student wellbeing when you were a student? What are the factors contributing to those assessments?
2. Did you have sufficient opportunities to express your opinions about school policies, particularly about matters that affect school climate and student wellbeing?
3. How often were students consulted by school administration about these issues?
4. What changes if any would you suggest to make the school better for all students'?

Classroom Visits

One of the team's responsibilities is to visit classrooms. 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.
- Is there evidence of internationalism/interculturalism and global awareness?

Your observations and findings from interviews, meetings and classroom visits maybe shared with the relevant members of the team either in Visiting Team meetings or in writing (when appropriate).

Preparing the School Climate and Partnerships for Learning Section of the Visiting Team Report

Member of the Visiting Team will add their comments on Part Two Section F directly onto the Reporting Booklet. These comments will be displayed in blue font. Upon completion the comments of the Visiting team will be locked by the Team Chair.

There are five steps in this process. These steps include: rating the standard, identifying the evidence to support the rating, any significant commendations (if appropriate), and significant recommendation (if indicated) and any additional advice (if indicated).

**VT STEP (a):
Give a rating 1, 2, 3, 4 for this Standard**

| <i>"Does Not Meet the Standard"</i> | | <i>"Meets the Standard"</i> | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Rating 1 | Rating 2 | Rating 3 | Rating 4 |
| There is currently evidence of very little or no alignment with this Standard. | There is currently evidence of partial but insufficient alignment with this Standard. Considerable work still needs to be done to come into alignment. | There is evidence of generally good alignment with this Standard. There is still some room for further development, and the school intends to address this. | There is evidence of excellent and effective alignment with this Standard. The school has embedded systems in place to ensure that alignment will be sustained. |

VT STEP (b)

Summarize in list form the evidence (given by the school and verified by the Team, or identified by the Team itself which supports the rating the Team has given to this Standard and which may lead to any Significant Commendations, Significant Recommendations, or Additional Advice given in the steps below.

VT STEP (c)

Write Significant Commendations (if any) with respect to this Standard

VT STEP (d)

Write Significant Recommendations (if any) for action to bring the school into better alignment with this Standard i.e. to move the school from a lower to a higher rating on the progressive scale 1 to 4.

Note - the school will be required to respond formally to these Significant Recommendations in its Two Year and Five Year Reports on Progress & Planning.

VT STEP (e)

Write Additional Advice (if any) on how the school could further develop to enhance its alignment with this Standard.

Note - the school will not need to respond formally to this Additional Advice in its Two Year and Five Year Reports on Progress and Planning.

Please note: On each template, there are allotted areas for the future Visiting Team to add its comments below the Self-Study Committee's report.

PART TWO – SECTION G

HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

Operational Systems

INTRODUCTION

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wish to thank you for joining this Visiting Team in an evaluation of an American/international school. The purpose of this Handbook for Evaluators is to assist you in fulfilling your responsibilities and assignments as a member of the Visiting Team.

There are three distinct parts to the accreditation process. The School has completed the first part of the process. **Part one** includes the preparation of the School Profile which is a compilation of factual information about the School and the analysis of the results of an opinion survey. This survey includes participation by students who are 11 years of age or older, faculty and support staff, parents, members of the governing board. In addition the School may elect to survey former students/alumni from the School. The focus of the survey is to gather information about the strengths of the School, areas in need of improvement, different perception of the community sectors and those actions that the school has or will take to develop improvement plans based on the survey data.

Part two of the process includes the work of the self-study committee to address the standards outlined in Section G. This self-study committee has collected and examined the evidence related to finance, the physical plant, health and safety issues, and auxiliary services. The members of the Visiting Team will add its comments on Part Two Section G directly on the reporting booklet completed by the self-study committee.

Part three of the process involves the development of “Strategies for Improvement.” These strategies were developed by the self-study committee and are based on the major strengths and areas for improvement as well as a comprehensive, well developed set of suggested action steps. The recommendations from the Visiting Team will be added to this list and the joint set of recommendations will form the school’s development/strategic plan for their future work.

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. 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:
 - Opinion Surveys
 - Part One and Part Three of the Self-Study
 - Part Two, Section A, School Guiding Statements

Part Two Sections you have been assigned.

- B. Review the entire self-study, examining thoroughly the documents that relate to your individual assignments. Make sure you review Appendix G of the “Journey to Excellence in International Education,” the Main Guide to School Evaluation and Accreditation, 8th Edition (Version 8.1). Note: Many of these documents may be attached to the Self-Study as links but when you are at the school these documents will be available to you in the Visiting Team room and the meeting room at the hotel.
- C. Take notes on the Standards and Indicators on Operational Systems 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.

While academic programs are primary reasons for the school’s existence, the school will not function well, nor provide for a safe, effective academic atmosphere, without strong financial underpinning, without adequate, secure, and well-maintained facilities, without an atmosphere and climate that creates health and well-being, and without operations that insure the safety of the entire community.

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

SECTION G: STANDARDS AND INDICATORS

Note: The term “governing body” includes any school ownership structure.

STANDARD G1

The management of school finances shall be consistent with best financial practices in international schools, in accordance with the legal requirements of the host country, and shall support the effective delivery of the school’s programs.

G1a

The head of school and the governing body regularly receive understandable financial reports which facilitate careful and regular reviews of the school’s short and longer term financial health and which ensure appropriate allocation of funding.

G1b

After appropriate input and debate, the governing body establishes annual school budgets - including appropriate fee levels – which ensure funding for programs necessary to put the school’s Guiding Statements into practice in an effective way.

G1c

Parents enrolling students are informed in advance of the precise nature and scope of their financial obligations, and changes in fees are communicated to parents early enough to allow them to make arrangements to move their children to other schools if necessary.

G1d

The school regularly considers - and where feasible applies in an effective manner - culturally appropriate and effective means of raising additional funds to support delivery of its programs.

G1e

Accounting processes are orderly, understood by all parties involved, and carried out in accordance with sound and ethical business practices.

G1f

The insurance program is comprehensive, and provides for effective risk and liability coverage for the school and for students, employees, visitors and members of the governing body.

G1g

Total servicing of long-term debt, including both interest and principal payments, is fairly apportioned to both present and future fee payers.

G1h

An annual, external audit of the school's finances is performed by an independent accounting firm, results are discussed at appropriate levels within the school, and any necessary action is taken.

STANDARD G2

Grounds, buildings, technical installations, basic furnishings, and equipment shall effectively support delivery of the programs required to put the school's Guiding Statements into practice.

G2a

The school's facilities/equipment provide for effective delivery of educational programs and a positive context for learning while promoting student, staff and visitor well-being. This includes satisfactory provision of indoor and outdoor spaces, air quality, heating and cooling, shade, shelter, lighting and acoustical comfort.

G2b

Teaching, storage and work spaces are suitable in size and layout for the age, number and needs of students and for the effective delivery of programs.

G2c

Governing body policies and school practices effectively address the adequacy, maintenance and improvement of school facilities/equipment.

G2d

If the school admits handicapped students or personnel, all reasonable provision is made for them.

G2e

Information and Communication Technology provisions (hardware, software, networks, training and maintenance) effectively support the management and operational functions of the school.

STANDARD G3

The school shall ensure that its grounds, buildings, technical installations, basic furnishings, equipment and systems provide for the health and safety of students, personnel and visitors.

G3a

School facilities meet the health and safety codes of local authorities and any reasonable stipulations which may be required by the accrediting agency/agencies.

G3b

Certificates of inspection and regulations required by law are available on file and/or posted in prominent places as appropriate.

G3c

An internal health and safety committee (or its equivalent) actively monitors conditions at the school and is effective in ensuring any deficiencies or anomalies are rapidly resolved.

G3d

Maintenance services are effective in ensuring that school premises and equipment remain in a safe and healthy condition.

G3e

Effective measures, including regular rehearsals, are in place to address fire or other emergency situations requiring evacuation.

G3f

Effective measures, including regular rehearsals, are in place to address emergencies requiring "safe haven/lock down".

G3g

The school takes all reasonable steps to operate its facilities and related services using environmentally responsible practices, hence acting as a positive model for students and the wider community.

STANDARD G4

The school shall provide or arrange for auxiliary services as required to support its declared objectives and programs, and shall ensure that such services meet acceptable standards of safety, efficiency and comfort.

G4a

Facilities for preparing, serving and consuming food and beverages meet appropriate standards of safety, comfort, hygiene and good dietary practice.

G4b

Appropriate and regularly reviewed arrangements exist to cover threats to the security of people and premises as well as to support – to the extent possible – program continuity under exceptional circumstances.

G4c

Vehicles used in student transportation are mechanically sound, clean, well-maintained, properly licensed and appropriately insured.

G4d

School premises are kept in an acceptably clean state at all times of the school day.

G4e

School trips are well planned and executed, ensuring a positive learning environment and supporting the school's academic or activities program. Appropriate consideration is shown for the comfort, welfare, security and safety of students and accompanying adults.

G4f

Support staff members and employees provided by contracted suppliers who are involved in the delivery of any auxiliary service are employed in suitable numbers.

G4g

Support staff members and employees provided by contracted suppliers are properly qualified and experienced, in appropriate health, well trained, and adequately assigned and supervised.

G4h

Support staff members and employees provided by contracted suppliers make a positive and well appreciated contribution to school life.

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 Student and Community Life 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? Exceptional?
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 standards on Operational Systems 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 Operational Systems

The purpose of this meeting with the self-study committee on Operational Systems is to gather and clarify information. The self-study committee developed a sense of how well the school meets CIS/NEASC standards on Operational Systems. During the meeting ask prompting questions based on the standards and indicators such as:

1. Have any aspects of the Operational Systems changed in any significant ways since the self-study section on Operational Systems was last approved?
2. Do students believe that they are fully supported by the Operational Systems?
3. How often do management and staff meet with student and parents to share information and ideas about issues and concerns relating to Operational Systems? Have these meetings been helpful?
4. What published documents about policies and other school matters relating to operations has the school sent to parents?
5. Do parents and students have any role in providing input into operations needs and programs?
6. How often are parents and students invited to discuss important decisions and to offer their opinions in regard to operational systems needs?
7. How does the school ensure that employees providing services in the operational systems receive up-to-date training and professional development in their area of responsibility?
8. How does the school remain current in the latest methods and practices in operational systems, e.g. security options, medical treatment, vehicles, dietary issues, etc?
9. How does the Board know that the school is conforming to local and national legal requirements regarding financial requirements, building requirements, safety requirements, etc?
10. Is there a written policy governing access to the facilities that gives priority to the program needs of the school?

Board and Leadership

Meet with administration and Board personnel who have particular responsibilities for Operational Systems. Try to determine the knowledge and extent of their support for these dimensions of the school.

1. How does the Board participate in current long range financial planning?
2. To what extent is management aware of an educational and financial plan for the short, medium, and long term?
3. To what extent is management consulted in the creation and periodic review of the educational and financial plans.
4. What provisions are in place to assure the security of students at the school and on school sponsored trips?
5. Who is responsible for hiring support staff? What background checks are conducted? What medical exams are required? How are new staff oriented and trained.
6. Where are emergency plans published/posted? When were they last updated? How often are they reviewed with staff, students, and families?
7. Is there a school safety committee? 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. 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?
10. Do you think the School adequately addresses environmental concerns in the daily operations?

Support Persons (Clerical, Maintenance, Food Service, Cleaning, etc.)

Meet with persons who provide operational services such as finance, security, maintenance, cleaning, and health and safety needs. These people often have important insight into how and why the school operates as it does, and what improvements are needed. Please note that Standard C5 addresses educational financial plans for the near and long term.

1. Please describe the budgeting process from the setting of fees to the annual external audit (for Business or Financial Manager). Does the process tend to produce balanced budgets at the end of the year?
2. Please provide copies of the statements sent out to parents. On average what percentage of tuitions and fees are being collected?
3. To what extent are faculty and staff allowed input into the budget?
4. (For the Director of Maintenance) Are you provided an adequate budget to maintain the physical plant in tiptop shape?
5. What the most pressing physical needs of the school?
6. (For the Food or Cafeteria supervisor) Are you given an adequate budget to provide quality and variety of food service?
7. What are the most pressing needs for improvement in your area of responsibility.
8. (For the Director of Maintenance) Who is responsible for security and for knowing the latest developments in providing security at schools.
9. Who monitors the cleanliness, physical tone, and sense of safety at the school?
10. Do you think the School adequately addresses environmental concerns in the daily operations?

Parents

When you speak with parents, try to determine their understanding about the quality and adequacy of Operational Systems as outlined in Section G. Determine the adequacy of their participation in shaping policies and decisions, particularly with regard to health, safety, and security. Ask questions such as the following:

1. In what ways have you been involved in discussions about school policies, facility needs, health and safety issues, transportation, and security.
2. Are parents satisfied with the programs and practices covered by Section G? Please explain.
3. Can communication between the school and you on these matters be improved and how?
4. What are the characteristics of the school that please you most? How important are the physical aspects of the school, and their upkeep and maintenance, in the success of the school's mission?
5. How well do you understand the financial requirements and financial health of the school?
6. Are the security guidelines and provisions appropriate for the safety of your child?
7. Do you have any concerns about the health facilities and health care for your child?
8. What improvements to the physical plant would you like to see initiated?

Students

The meetings with students will be more focused on other aspects of the school but it is important to get their perspective on some issues relating to Operational Systems. You might ask such questions as the following:

1. Are you satisfied with the services of the kitchen/cafeteria/dining hall? Why or why not?
2. Do you feel safe at the school at all times?
3. Are you happy at this school? Why or why not?
4. Do you know what to do in the event of a fire or emergency?
5. Do you know the names of the staff? Are they treated with respect?
6. Does the school lack any facilities that you think are essential to your learning and well-being at the school?
7. Are students consulted on such issues as food services, facility needs, health and safety, and security?
8. Do you think the school adequately addresses environmental concerns in the daily operations?

Teachers

Meeting with teachers will provide you an opportunity to determine to what extent the Operational Systems meet the expressed needs of teachers, students and their parents. It should also provide you an opportunity to determine the degree of confidence the teachers have in the financial, physical plant, safety and health, and security dimensions of the school. Ask questions such as the following:

1. What is your assessment of the financial healthy of the school? Are you reasonably satisfied that the budget provides you with necessary tools for the classroom, professional development, and adequate total compensation.
2. Does the school have a thorough approach to providing for the safety, health, and security of the students?
3. Do teachers have the opportunity to provide input which would improve the operational aspects of the school?
4. Do teachers and students feel a responsibility to take care of the physical facilities?
5. Is there good communication between the teachers and the staff (food service, maintenance, cleaning, drivers, etc.)? Are there any occasions when you are all together?
6. Do you feel safe and secure while at the school?
7. Do you think the School adequately addresses environmental concerns in the daily operations?

Evaluation of School Policies and Procedures

The Eighth Edition of the CIS/NEASC Main Guide to School Evaluation and Accreditation, "Journey to Excellence in International Education," emphasizes the school policies and procedures in its standards and indicators. As the team member responsible for Operational Systems, you will review and critique the written policies and procedures that relate to this section, including:

1. financial information sent to parents
2. fire safety procedures
3. security procedures
4. fire, health, and safety inspection documents
5. the possible sources of evidence listed in the Appendix for Section G in the Self-Study Guide.

Preparing the Operational Systems, Section G of the Visiting Team Report

Member of the Visiting Team will add their comments on Part Two Section G directly onto the Reporting Booklet. These comments will be displayed in blue font. Upon completion the comments of the Visiting team will be locked by the Team Chair.

There are five steps in this process. These steps include: rating the standard, identifying the evidence to support the rating, any significant commendations (if appropriate), and significant recommendation (if indicated) and any additional advice (if indicated).

VT STEP (a):

Give a rating 1, 2, 3 or 4 for this Standard.

| <i>“Does Not Meet the Standard”</i> | | <i>“Meets the Standard”</i> | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Rating 1 | Rating 2 | Rating 3 | Rating 4 |
| There is currently evidence of very little or no alignment with this Standard. | There is currently evidence of partial but insufficient alignment with this Standard. Considerable work still needs to be done to come into alignment. | There is evidence of generally good alignment with this Standard. There is still some room for further development, and the school intends to address this. | There is evidence of excellent and effective alignment with this Standard. The school has embedded systems in place to ensure that alignment will be sustained. |

VT STEP (b):

Summarize in list form the evidence (given by the school and verified by the Team, or identified by the Team itself) which supports the rating the Team has given to this Standard and which may lead to any Significant Commendations, Significant Recommendations, or Additional Advice given in the steps below.

VT STEP (c):

Write Significant Commendations (if any) with respect to this Standard.

VT STEP (d):

Write Significant Recommendations (if any) for action to bring the school into better alignment with this Standard i.e. to move the school from a lower to a higher rating on the progressive scale 1 to 4.

Note – the school will be required to respond formally to these Significant Recommendations in its Two Year and Five Year Reports on Progress & Planning.

VT STEP (e):

Write Additional Advice (if any) on how the school could further develop to enhance its alignment with this Standard.

Please note: On each template, there are allotted areas for the future Visiting Team to add its comments below the Self-Study Committee’s report.

PART THREE

HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATORS

Strategies for Improvement

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) wish to thank you for joining this Visiting Team in an evaluation of an international school. The accreditation program is a three-step process:

- A Self-Study conducted by the school requesting accreditation.
- An evaluation by a Visiting Team (VT) of experienced educators.
- A follow-up program in which the school addresses recommendations by CIS/NEASC members of the 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. Your task is to participate with other team members in the activities and deliberations that will result in a team recommendation to the accrediting agency on that matter.

Your task as an evaluator will be to complete team assignments and individual assignment(s.) Team assignments are those that you'll share with others, such as attendance at team meetings, assisting team members in completing group tasks, and participating in joint interviews and other meetings with school personnel. 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 responding to the school's self-assessment in one or more of the Reporting Booklets that comprise the Self-Study. 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 documents, and contributing to team 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:
 - The school profile that was completed in Part One of the Self-Study
 - The analysis of the demographic and achievement data and opinion surveys that the school completed in Part One of the Self-Study
 - The school's Mission or other Guiding Statements
 - The school's responses to Part Three of the Self-Study

- B. Review the full Self-Study, examining thoroughly the supporting documents and Reporting Booklets that relate to your individual assignment(s). Pay particular attention to the standards and indicators for each of the seven sections in Part Two of the Self-Study.
- C. Take notes on the school's responses to the requirements of Part Three of the Self-Study. These are found in the Reporting Booklet for Part Three. From these notes, write questions to ask when you meet with members of the school community.
- D. Arrive at the school (1) prepared to share your preliminary findings with your colleagues on the Visiting Team and (2) with some initial thoughts about your own responses to what the school has written about its "strategies for improvement." The latter ideas will change as you tour the school, give further review to the supporting documents provided by the school, and meet with school personnel, parents and students.
- E. Consult the glossary at the end of this handbook for terms that are unfamiliar to you.

During the Visit

Tour of the School

School officials will guide the team on a school tour to acquaint Visiting Team members with the facilities and grounds. During that time you should pay particular attention to any areas related to the school's Part Three responses, particularly the major areas in need of strengthening. Please take notes on the following issues:

1. Are the general appearance and cleanliness of the campus satisfactory to meet student needs and parent and staff expectations?
2. Do the physical facilities accurately reflect the school's own description of its physical resources? Are there any areas for needed strengthening and related action steps identified in the Part Three report?
3. Is there evidence that would support parent, staff, or student perceptions of the strengths or areas in need of improvement of plant resources (if any) that were referenced in the opinion survey?
4. Are there potentially serious safety hazards that are evident in the buildings or about the grounds? Are these identified as areas for improvement, with appropriate action steps, in the school's Part Three report?
5. Are there areas of the school that present accessibility concerns?
6. Are there adequate space, facilities and equipment in the library, cafeteria, auditorium and gymnasium, small and large group areas, and in classrooms.

Team Orientation Meeting

On the first evening of your visit, the team chair may ask you to comment on your initial perceptions for the benefit of the rest of the Visiting Team. Be prepared to give brief initial comments about the extent to which what you have read or observed to date reflects the school's identification of major strengths and major factors needing strengthening in its Part Three report.

Meetings with Committees and Groups

During the VT's (Visiting Team's) accreditation visit, you will meet with members of the school community to verify facts presented in the school's Self-Study and to validate its conclusions. In addition, you should try to ascertain whether school community members: concur with and support the school's guiding statements; revise practices, policies, and procedures periodically in response to self-assessments or external data; and are striving for ongoing improvement. The scheduled and informal meetings with school personnel and the related discussions with your team members will be crucial to focusing the development of the report(s) 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/individual the opportunity to express opinions, ideas, and concerns. Follow these simple guidelines as you chair or participate in a discussion with school representatives:

- 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. Inquire if there are any relevant changes to the report at hand. 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 additional 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 Part Three

The Self-Study Committee for Part Three (possibly the Steering Committee for the Self-Study) has spent considerable time in reviewing the work of the other subcommittees. As a result, its members can be expected to have a comprehensive knowledge of both the findings and conclusions of the various other subcommittees. As well, this committee has been charged with (a) identifying major strengths of the school and major factors in need of strengthening, and (b) developing strategies for improvement. The following questions may be helpful as you consider your comments about the school's Part Three responses.

1. What were the criteria that your committee used to select the school's major strengths?
2. What were the criteria that your committee used to select the major factors in need of strengthening?
3. Does your school have an existing strategic plan or other long term plan for making improvements?
4. What group or individual in your school has the ultimate responsibility for long range planning and the implementation of such plans?

5. Of the suggested actions for improvements, which will be the most challenging to implement and why?

Board

It is important to ascertain the extent to which the board has been involved with the development and/or review of the strategic planning suggestions made by the Part Three Committee. The following questions are appropriate for board members or the school's owner(s).

1. What procedures does the school routinely use for making long term plans for improvements at the school?
2. Who, or what group, at the school typically has responsibility for ensuring that long terms plans are made and implemented?
3. What role, if any, has the board had in participating with or reviewing the work of the Self-Study committees?
4. What do you see as the major strengths of this school?
5. What do you see as the major factors in need of strengthening?
6. What are the major challenges that the school faces in making the suggested improvements?

Management

The school head and management team must be very familiar with the school's responses to the requirements in Part Three of the Self-Study. The following questions assume that knowledge.

1. Were members of the school's leadership team involved in the identification of the major strengths and factors in need of improvement?
2. To what extent are the school leaders in agreement with the identified strengths and factors in need of strengthening?
3. What role will the leadership team pay in implementing the recommended actions of the Part Three Committee?
4. What are the major challenges that the school faces in making the suggested improvements?

Teachers

The instructional staff should be knowledgeable about the school's strengths and the challenges that lie ahead. These questions may be helpful in assessing that assumption.

1. What are the four or five major strengths of this school?
2. What are the four or five major factors in need of strengthening at this school?
3. Can you give a few examples that would indicate that ongoing improvement is a priority at this school?
4. Are there special challenges that will make recommended improvements difficult to accomplish at this time?

Alumni and Parents

Parents and graduates of the school should feel that theirs are important voices in the school community and that their opinions are sought and valued in developing and assessing school goals and in responding to issues or concerns. These questions may test that assumption.

1. What do you believe to be the four or five major strengths of this school?
2. What do you believe to be the four or five major factors in need of strengthening?
3. Can you give a few examples that would indicate that ongoing improvement is a priority at this school?
4. Are there special challenges that will make recommended improvements difficult to accomplish at this time?

Students

Students should be aware of the school's purposes in order to appreciate the programs and activities that are offered. Questions posed should consider the relative maturity of the students.

1. What do you like best about your school?
2. How did your parents choose this school for you?
3. What are some ways in which this school is what you expected it to be? How is it different?
4. If you could change one thing about this school, what would it be?
5. What do you think this school is most successful in doing?

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 guiding statements.
- 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, e.g. whether all or only some of the student 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, equipment and other teaching resources to support the delivery of the curriculum.
- the level of integration of technology in classroom instruction.
- the extent to which there is evidence of the development of multi-culturalism.

Your observations and findings from interviews, meetings, and classroom visits may be shared with the relevant members of the team, either in VT meetings or in writing (when appropriate).

Writing the Report for Part Three

The Eighth Edition of the CIS/NEASC Main Guide to School Evaluation and Accreditation asks the Part Three committee to be reflective and perceptive in reviewing the work of the other Self-Study committees and in identifying the major strengths and the major factors in need of strengthening at the school. As well, the school is expected to articulate suggested plans for improvement and to identify any impediments to the implementation of the suggested actions. As the team member responsible for Part Three you will review and critique the thoroughness of the work of the Part Three committee and particularly the suggested remedial steps that are being recommended (in red under SSC).

Your report will consist of guided responses to what the Part Three committee has written and to your own assessment of thoroughness of their plans for making improvements at this school. Your responses will be written in the same reporting booklet under VT Response (in blue)

Appendix A

Glossary for Handbook 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 - 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 lowest to highest grade.

Atlas Rubicon - a Web-based curriculum management tool that electronically incorporates curriculum mapping, tracks gaps and repetition in instruction and assessment within a standards based curriculum framework.

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 - the group, mandated by German law, which represents the professional staff in negotiating specific school issues. (Germany)

CAS - Creativity, action, service is at the heart of the Diploma program, involving student ins a range of activities that take place alongside their academic studies throughout the IB Diploma Program. The component's three stands, often interwoven with particular activities, are characterized as follows:

Creativity – arts and other experiences that involve creative thinking

Action – physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work elsewhere in the IB Diploma Program.

Service – an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the Student.

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

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

Edexcel - 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.

Edline - An information management system that a school community may use for communication and class organization. This web site provides an integrated platform for the entire school community and supports administrators, parents, teachers and students.

ELMLE - European League of Middle Level Education; an association bringing together educators interested in Middle School education.

ERB (Educational Records Bureau) - a non-profit educational resources membership association of public, independent and proprietary schools providing admissions, achievement and support services for PreK – Grade 12. For over 80 years, and nearly 2,000 member schools and districts, ERB has provided quality services to schools around the world.

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 - the duly constituted group which has the ultimate authority to make decisions on behalf of the school. It may be called the *Board of Trustees, Governing Council, Owners (for proprietary schools), and the like*.

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

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

HR - Human Resources

IB - International Baccalaureate

IB Diploma - awarded upon successful examination results in six subjects, three at the higher level and three at standard 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 A1 - English, the language of instruction;
2. Second Language
3. Individuals and Societies
4. Experimental Sciences
5. Mathematics and Computer Science
6. The Arts, or a further subject from groups 1-5 above. In addition, student must complete an Extended Essay, The CAS requirement (see above), and the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course (see below).

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 the arts, which means that the program can be built on any sound curriculum. The IBO 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.

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 Program is usually drawn up by school counselors or learning support staff for students with special needs, talents, or other factors which may affect their performance in school.

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 - 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.

ISA - International Schools Assessment: a standardized test instrument measuring student performance in reading, writing, and mathematical literacy. The test has been developed by the Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER) and provides comparative data, especially among international schools.

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 - the group of *administrators* whose main role is to supervise school operations.

MAP - Measures of Academic Progress is a standardized testing program developed by the Northwest Evaluation Association. The testing program has established international norms and uses computerized adaptive assessments tools to understanding each student's academic level.

Moodle - An open-source 3-learning software platform which serves as a Course Management System within a school community.

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 - The IB Middle Years Program, for students aged 11 to 16, provides a framework of academic challenge that encourages students to embrace and understand the connections between traditional subjects and the real world, and become critical and reflective thinkers.

The program consists of eight subject groups integrated through five areas of interaction that provide a framework for learning within and across the subjects. Students are required to study their mother tongue, a second language, humanities, sciences, mathematics, arts, physical education and technology. In the final year of the program, student also engage in a personal project, which allows them to demonstrate the understandings and skills they have developed throughout the program.

NCTM - National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

NMSQT - National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test - (Please see PSAT)

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 traditional assessments. Also known as authentic assessment.

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

Portfolio - 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

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 - The IB Primary Years Program, for students aged 3 to 12, focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside. The most significant and distinctive feature of the IB Primary Years Program is the **six transdisciplinary themes**.

These themes are about issues that have meaning for, and are important to, all of us. The program offers a balance between learning about or through the subjects areas and learning beyond them. The six themes of global significance create a transdisciplinary framework that allows students to "step up" beyond the confines of learning within subject areas.

- Who we are
- Where we are in place and time
- How we express ourselves
- How the world works
- How we organize ourselves
- Sharing the planet

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

School community - 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.

Standards Based Curriculum Framework - a curriculum framework which is part of an outcome-based education or standards based education design. The framework is the first step, defining clear, high standards which will be achieved by all students. The curriculum and

learning experiences are then aligned to the standards. Students are assessed against the standards with a student reporting system that reflects those standards.

TESOL - Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

TOEFL - Test of English as a Foreign Language

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

UCAS - The organization responsible for managing applications to higher education course in the UK.

UCLES - University of Cambridge (UK) Local Examinations Syndicate