

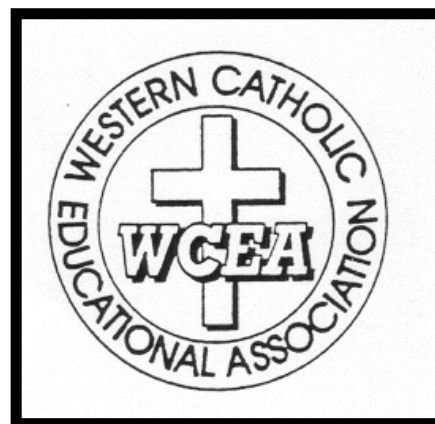
WASC/WCEA

Visiting Committee Member Handbook

to Accompany
Process for School Improvement

for

Catholic Elementary Schools



2003 REVISION

WASC/WCEA

Visiting Committee Member

Handbook

Process for School Improvement

Catholic Elementary Schools

2003 REVISION

Minor edits July 2005.

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OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

Background

The accreditation process outlined in the Process for School Improvement resulted from the joint efforts of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and the Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA). These two groups synthesized the issues and concerns from the WASC and WCEA constituencies with current thinking and research-based knowledge about teaching and learning, including spiritual goals that are of special interest to WCEA. The basic concepts addressed in this new process focus upon student success in meeting Schoolwide Learning Expectations (i.e., what each student should know, understand, value, and be able to do by graduation). They are:

- ✦ How are the students doing with respect to the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?
- ✦ Is the school doing everything possible to support high achievement of these expectations for all its students?
- ✦ To what extent are the WCEA standards (and descriptive characteristics) relating to Catholic identity infused into the total school program?

The three specific objectives of this jointly developed document are:

- ✦ To develop schoolwide criteria that reflect the consensus of educators on the critical components needed for school programs that will prepare students for success in the 21st century;
- ✦ To develop a process that is integral to school assessment, planning, and implementation based upon analysis of school learning and interdisciplinary discussions;
- ✦ To integrate the WASC criteria with those of the WCEA to ensure a comprehensive accreditation process that reflects the concerns of both organizations.

Revision and School Change

Elements of school change incorporated into the WASC/WCEA School Improvement Process include:

- ✦ The clarification of the school's mission, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations for all students
- ✦ The involvement of the school community in self-directed problem-solving
- ✦ The opportunity for the following:
 - Analysis of the actual program for students
 - Meaningful dialogue
 - Collaboration and shared decision-making
- ✦ The use of high quality criteria to analyze the program for students

- ✦ The development of a School Improvement Action Plan to support desired learning expectations
- ✦ The opportunity for an outside perspective regarding the proposed changes through the Visiting Committee's dialogue and findings
- ✦ The monitoring of progress in meeting or redefining goals and actions through accreditation reviews and reports

School Improvement Cycle

The accreditation process is a perpetual cycle of assessment, planning, implementing, monitoring, and reassessment (Self-Study, Visit, and follow-up).

- ✦ During the year prior to the Visit a school clarifies or redefines its Schoolwide Learning Expectations and begins the formal Self-Study process that assesses the actual student program with respect to the criteria.
- ✦ The Self-Study process culminates in the development of a three to five year School Improvement Action Plan.
- ✦ The completed Self-Study report is presented to the Visiting Committee members at their previsit meeting, which takes place at least four to five weeks prior to their Visit.
- ✦ Using the results of the Visit, the school modifies and implements its School Improvement Action Plan in this ongoing cycle of improvement.

Categories of Criteria

The criteria are research-based guidelines of systematic school improvement that address accreditation's central tenet: a school operates with a clear understanding of its mission and philosophy.

Schools will be assessed against four categories of criteria. These are:

1. Organization for Student Learning
2. Curriculum and Instruction
3. Support for Student Personal, Spiritual, and Academic Growth
4. Resource Management and Development

Key Outcomes of Self-Study

The school's Self-Study will facilitate the engagement of the school staff and other school community members in the examination of its program in relation to the four categories of criteria. Through the completion of this process the school will have accomplished:

- ✦ The involvement and collaboration of school/community members in the Self-Study;
- ✦ The clarification of the school's mission, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations;

- ✦ The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning and spiritual development with respect to the criteria and Schoolwide Learning Expectations;
- ✦ The development of a School Improvement Action Plan that addresses identified growth needs (critical areas for follow-up); and
- ✦ The development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the School Improvement Action Plan.

Importance of School's Mission, Philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations

An essential element of systematic school improvement is a clear statement of mission and philosophy on the part of the members of the school community.

The mission and philosophy provide the school's foundation for establishing Schoolwide Learning Expectations; these state the knowledge, skills, spiritual principles, values and understandings students should possess upon graduation from the school. The attainment of these learning expectations drives the instructional program and supports the operations of the school. The school's mission, philosophy and Schoolwide Learning Expectations are integral to the school's accreditation process.

Importance of School's Curricular Standards

Curricular standards define essential knowledge, skills, and learning opportunities for schoolwide learning within disciplines. They are powerful, measurable indicators of the learning expectations. In a quality educational system, schools determine the benchmarks for students' work that meet the standards and use multiple assessment measures to identify the level of achievement for all students. This approach assists schools in defining quality accomplishment of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations and determines the degree to which all students are achieving them.

Importance of Evidence

Translating the school's mission and philosophy into Schoolwide Learning Expectations for all students is a beginning. The Self-Study phase of the accreditation process revolves around an in-depth gathering of evidence that will enable a school to take an honest look at what is and is not working based upon the criteria and the Schoolwide Learning Expectations. This verification is key to learning about the actual instructional and spiritual climate experienced by students.

Examples of strategies, which will be used for this review, are:

- ✦ Examination of student work
- ✦ Observation of students working
- ✦ Interviewing of students about what they are learning
- ✦ Review of group test data
- ✦ Analysis of surveys from parents, staff, clergy, and students

Self-Study Product

The written Self-Study is a compilation of the school's findings and its updated School Improvement Action Plan.

The format and content are given below:

Introduction **Summary of School's Self-Study Process**

Responsible Committees: Leadership Team

Chapter 1 **Student/Community Profile With Supporting Data**

Responsible Committees: Leadership Team
Student/Community Profile Committee

Chapter 2 **Progress Report on Recommendations From the Previous Full Self-Study**

Responsible Committees: Leadership Team

Chapter 3 **Schoolwide Learning Expectations**

- ✦ Place a copy of the school's mission, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations first in this chapter. Follow that with a simple statement that Schoolwide Learning Expectations flow from the mission and philosophy statements of the school.
- ✦ Included is a short narrative explaining the process used to develop consensus on the Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Responsible Committees: Leadership Team
Stakeholders

Chapter 4 **Self-Study Findings**

- ✦ Review the criteria and identify what evidence is needed to compare the school program to the criteria.
- ✦ Gather and analyze evidence about the quality of the school program with respect to the criteria.
- ✦ Analyze and synthesize all information and evidence and determine areas for growth within criteria categories.

Responsible Committees: Leadership Team
Entire School Faculty

Chapter 5 **School Improvement Action Plan**

- ✦ Create a comprehensive School Improvement Action Plan that will focus on achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations

Responsible Committees: Leadership Team
Entire School Faculty

Chapter 6 Implementation of School Improvement Action Plan

- ✪ Discuss the process to monitor the plan's implementation and accomplishment.

Responsible Committees: Leadership Team

Visit

After careful review of the School Self-Study Report, a Visiting Committee composed of educators spends three days at the school. The purpose of the Visit is to provide an outside perspective from educators who are thoroughly familiar with the criteria used by the school.

The Visiting Committee gives insight to the school through dialogue with the Self-Study Committees about the Self-Study findings and by its own gathering of evidence and analysis of student work. In collaboration, the Leadership Team/Self-Study committees compare findings, including the Visiting Committee's assessment of the school on each criteria. The discussion and written results assist the school in redefining the School Improvement Action Plan with respect to the criteria and the Schoolwide Learning Expectations. The Visiting Committee and Visiting Committee Report validate, verify, and provide direction for school improvement.

Follow-up

Subsequent to the Visit, the school refines and implements the School Improvement Action Plan. The Leadership Team will coordinate this implementation, the annual review of progress, and the refinement of the "next steps" in meeting the goals. All follow-up is done with respect to evidence that students are accomplishing the established Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

An annual review of progress is to be submitted in writing to the Arch/Diocesan School Department.

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WASC/WCEA SCHOOLWIDE
CRITERIA-BASED CATEGORIES

WASC/WCEA SCHOOLWIDE CRITERIA-BASED CATEGORIES

CATEGORY A: ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING

Criterion A.1: School Mission and Philosophy

The school has established a clear statement of mission and philosophy that reflects a commitment to Catholic identity, thoroughness of instruction, a focus on the needs of the whole person, parents as primary educators, teachers as facilitators of learning, and recognition of the dignity of all members of the school community.

Criterion A.2: Governance

The school administration (pastor and principal) seeks input/participation from members of the school community, adopts policies which are consistent with the school mission and philosophy, delegates implementation to the professional staff, monitors results, and is committed to sharing the Catholic vision.

Criterion A.3: School Leadership

The school leadership encourages the cultivation of Catholic values and the spiritual formation of the school community, focuses the energies of the school on achievement of schoolwide learning expectations, empowers the staff, and ensures shared accountability for student learning.

Criterion A.4: Staff

The school administration and staff are professionally qualified, dedicated to the school's mission and philosophy, and committed to ongoing spiritual and professional development that will promote student learning. In addition, administration and staff are prepared to lead by example and work collaboratively to create a community of faith.

Criterion A.5: School Environment

The Catholic school is responsible for creating and nurturing a safe and healthy environment, which fosters community and the achievement of religious and educational goals. This environment is characterized by trust, professionalism, realistic expectations for each student, and a respect for diversity.

Criterion A.6: Reporting Student Progress

The administration and staff regularly review and report to the school community progress toward accomplishing the schoolwide learning expectations.

Criterion A.7: School Improvement Process

The school administration facilitates school improvement, a process which:

- ✪ Is driven by a plan of action that embodies faith formation and quality teaching for all students;
- ✪ Has school community commitment and involvement, and;
- ✪ Effectively guides the work of the school. The administration and instructional staff in cooperation with the school community demonstrate accountability through the monitoring of the implementation of the School Improvement Action Plan.

CATEGORY B: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Criterion B.1: What Students Learn

The school provides a challenging, comprehensive, and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's mission and philosophy, strengthens Catholic identity, and results in achievement of the schoolwide learning expectations. The ultimate goal is to build a continuum of learning that makes sense for all students - one that builds upon itself to create the cumulative effect desired.

Criterion B.2: How Students Learn

The professional staff uses research-based knowledge about teaching and learning, and designs and implements a variety of learning and formation experiences which actively engage students and are consistent with the school's philosophy, mission, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Criterion B.3: How Assessment Is Used

Teacher and student use of assessment is frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process. Assessment results are the basis for:

- Measurement of progress toward the Schoolwide Learning Expectations;
- Regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction, and allocation of resources.

CATEGORY C: SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL, SPIRITUAL, AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

Criterion C.1: Student Connectedness

Within the school's community of faith, students are connected to a system of support services, activities, and opportunities to assist them in meeting the challenges of the curricular/co-curricular program in order to achieve the Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Criterion C.2: Parent/Community Involvement

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

CATEGORY D: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Criterion D.1: Resources

The resources available to the school are sufficient to sustain the school program and reflect sound financial practices and responsible stewardship, and are effectively used to carry out the school mission, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Criterion D.2: Resource Planning

The administration executes responsible resource planning for the future.

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KEY TERMINOLOGY

KEY TERMINOLOGY

To ensure common understanding of the terms, which are used in the criteria, essential questions, and rubrics, the following definitions are provided and will be operational for the WASC/WCEA Process for School Improvement.

Accreditation: A process whereby a school conducts a Self-Study that serves as the basis for a review by a team composed of educators representing WCEA and WASC. The team members assist the school in appraising their instructional program. The school is evaluated on (1) the degree to which there is clarity of the school's mission and philosophy reflected through the school's leadership, instructional program, policies, and use of time and resources; and (2) how adequately the WCEA and WASC criteria are being met. The maximum term of accreditation is six years.

All Students: A reference to the belief that all students can learn at high levels within a faith-centered context, and should have sufficient support to enable them to achieve the Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Every student enrolled in the school, regardless of sub-population or unique characteristics, is included.

Alternative Assessment: Any type of assessment in which students create a response to a question (as opposed to assessments in which students choose a response from a given list, such as multiple choice, true/false, or matching). Alternative assessments can include short-answer question, essays, performance assessment, oral presentations, demonstrations, exhibitions, and portfolios.

Analyze: Determine carefully the fundamental elements of a document.

Areas for Growth: Specific areas within the overall school program identified as weak and targeted for possible inclusion in the School Improvement Action Plan.

Areas for Growth Prioritized: This is the process of listing in order of importance from first to last the identified areas for growth in the overall school program. Those areas with the higher priority become the critical areas for growth upon which the School Improvement Action Plan is built.

Articulation: Teachers and administration will collaborate so that subject area expectations will be presented at developmentally appropriate grade levels and graduates of the school will have mastered the content, skills, and strategies deemed essential.

Authentic Assessment: Assessment tasks that elicit demonstration of knowledge and skills in ways that resemble "real life" as closely as possible. An authentic assessment also engages students in the activity and reflects best instructional activities.

Catholic Identity: The distinctive religious dimension found in the complementary approaches to the dogmatic teachings and the faith traditions, which emphasize: Christian service, moral development, and the educational climate.

Challenging Relevant Curriculum: A demanding, faith-centered curriculum based on themes and concepts that encourage the students to achieve at their potential, to use "higher order thinking skills," and to apply and synthesize knowledge.

Coherent Curriculum: A curriculum that is viewed as a broadly conceived concept and makes sense as a whole with components that are unified, connected, and integrated.

Competency: This is a performance objective that requires evidence of sufficient knowledge or level of ability gained to meet proficiency standards in a given curricular area.

Critical Areas for Growth: These are the areas for growth identified as most important on the school's prioritized list for immediate inclusion in the School Improvement Action Plan.

Current Educational Research and Thinking: Research and related discourse and publications on education and learning. Examples include: works and publications on state, national and subject area standards; and government, business, and industry research.

Data: Material serving as a basis for discussion, inference, or determination of policy, detailed information.

Diverse Population: The variety of sub-populations in the school, populations defined by ethnicity, gender, religious affiliations/beliefs, ability levels, socio-economic status, etc.

Facilitators: Creators of learning experiences that actively engage students in the learning process; those who provide a physical and instructional climate where students experience learning.

Grade Level Subject Area Expectations: Statements of what students are to know, understand, and be able to do at the completion of each grade.

- a. **Subject Area:** A specific body of information or knowledge, a discipline.
- b. **Subject Area Expectations:** Established expectations for what students are to know, understand and be able to do within a subject area at each grade level. These grade level expectations are aligned with the schoolwide learning expectations and "enable" the students to progress toward accomplishing them.

In-depth Study: Detailed and systematic review of a specific area of the curriculum.

Mission: Overall purpose and intentions of a school, incorporating the beliefs, concepts, and values on which the school's programs are based, and the goals toward which the school's efforts are directed.

Performance Assessment: Direct observation of student performance or student work and professional judgment of the quality of that performance. Good quality performance assessment has pre-established performance criteria.

Philosophy: Basic beliefs or principles which relate to what the school is attempting to do, clearly and concisely expressing the fundamental purpose of the school, and reflecting the four-fold dimension of Catholic education which includes message, community, service, and worship.

Portfolio: A purposeful collection of representative student work over a period of time.

Prior Knowledge: A student's perception and/or misconception about a subject that needs to be identified and clarified before direct instruction or investigation.

School Community: The school community includes faculty, support staff, non-certified staff, administration, pastor/parish, parents, students, school board, arch/diocese, and community partners (businesses, education institutions, agencies, and service organizations).

School Improvement Action Plan: A document that reflects the overall improvement strategies and the step-by-step process that details specific activities using existing resources that can address the school's critical areas for growth, which has been identified as a result of Self-Study.

Self-Study Coordinator (SC): The facilitator/leader of the school's Self-Study process.

Special Need Students: Students who need additional support services to accomplish the Schoolwide Learning Expectations at their maximum potential.

Stakeholders: Significant participants.

Standard: Level of excellence, attainment, etc. regarded as a measure of adequacy.

Standardized Achievement Testing: A battery of tests designed for each grade level to measure school/student achievement in relation to that of a national norm sample or in relation to national criteria.

Schoolwide Learning Expectations: Statements of what a student should know, understand, value, and be able to do by graduation. These learning expectations are collaboratively developed and represent the focus of the entire school community.

Student-Centered Learning: Focus upon student success in meeting learning expectations. The professional staff designs and implements a variety of learning experiences which actively engage students at a high level of learning that is consistent with the school's mission, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Synthesis: The combination of separate parts or elements so as to form a whole.

Synthesize: To combine so as to form a whole.

Target Areas: Selection of the most appropriate areas upon which to focus school improvement efforts.

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SCHOOL SELF-STUDY
TIMELINE

**SCHOOL SELF-STUDY TIMELINE: FLOW OF ACTIVITIES
(Sample)**

- Preliminary Activities:
1. Development or review of Mission and Philosophy Statement
 2. Involvement of stakeholders in development of Schoolwide Learning Expectations
 3. Development of student/community profile

August - January	Players	Product
★ Participation in training/orientation	Principal, Self-Study Coordinator, Staff, and other Stakeholders	None
★ Update Student/Community Profile	Student Profile Committee Leadership Team	Written Summary Support Data
★ Clarification of Schoolwide Learning Expectations	Leadership Team Stakeholders	Written list and process description
★ Development of progress report from last full Self-Study	Leadership Team	Written response to each recommendation
★ Understanding use of criteria	Entire School Staff	None

January - December	Players	Product
★ Student programs: What exists/ what should be	Self-Study Committees In-depth Subject Area Committees	Notes/evidence for Self-Study use
★ Data gathering based on WASC/WCEA criteria	Self-Study Committees In-depth Subject Area Committees	Notes/evidence for Self-Study Committees
★ Synthesis of all information/ evidence Determination of critical areas for follow-up	Self-Study Committees In-depth Subject Area Committees	Written summary and evidence
★ Creation of a School Improvement Action Plan using Self-Study Committee findings	Leadership Team Entire School Faculty	Written Plan
★ Establishment of follow-up process	Leadership Team	Description

January - March	Players	Product
★ The Visit	School/Visiting Committee	Visiting Committee Report

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SCHOOL COMMITTEES:
PROBABLE PLAYERS

SCHOOL COMMITTEES: PROBABLE PLAYERS

To conduct a meaningful Self-Study, the school is expected to involve the total staff in the process. Parents, students, and parish community should be included so as to gain their perspectives on school programs. This involvement may be through committee participation, interviews, surveys, or other means. In the model process this can be accomplished by establishing the suggested committees; however, these should be adapted to fit local conditions. For example, smaller schools may find that using a "Committee of the Whole" will be more effective in assessing the program for students.

Below are the stated responsibilities and potential membership of committees for the Self-Study process.

Leadership Team

- ✦ Facilitation of entire Self-Study process
- ✦ Refinement of Schoolwide Learning Expectations
- ✦ Creation of a School Improvement Action Plan using findings of Self-Study Committees
- ✦ Coordination of the follow-up process to monitor the implementation and the accomplishment of the School Improvement Action Plan
 - Self-Study Coordinator(s)
 - School Principal
 - Vice Principal
 - Secretary
 - Chairs for Self-Study Committees (For larger schools - faculty representing each of the four categories with their respective criteria)

Student/Community Profile Committee

- ✦ Development of Student/Community Profile
 - Administrators
 - Certificated Staff
 - Students
 - Parents

Self-Study Committees

- ✦ Synthesis of all data within criteria categories
- ✦ Determination of critical areas for follow-up within criteria categories

A Self-Study Committee is composed of certified staff and other school community members. There should be a minimum of four Self-Study Committees, one for each category of criteria. The Self-Study Committee consists of the following members:

- Faculty Member(s)
- Support Staff Member(s)
- Student
- Parent
- School Board Member

**In-depth Subject Area
Committees**

- ⊕ **Analysis of what is being taught and learned with respect to grade level subject area expectations, curricular references, criteria, and standards. The following persons are involved in the In-depth studies:**
 - All certificated personnel who teach the targeted subjects (Religion and subject area to be determined.)
 - Instructional Assistants

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COORDINATOR GUIDELINES

SELF-STUDY COORDINATOR AND VISITING COMMITTEE CHAIR PREPARATION

1. Visiting Committee Chairperson and Self-Study Coordinator communicate prior to Visit

Prior to the Visit, the Visiting Committee Chairperson will be in communication with the Self-Study Coordinator and principal to answer questions or give assistance. The principal and the Chairperson should establish a date for the Chairperson to visit the school (optional). Through this contact, the Chair will become familiar with the school, assess and support the Self-Study progress, offer guidance in conducting the Self-Study, and begin to develop a detailed schedule for the Visit.

Questions the Chairperson will discuss during the preliminary visit and through continual contact with the school may include:

- ★ How are key outcomes of the Self-Study addressed in the Self-Study process? In what ways have the school leaders modified the model Self-Study process to accommodate the school community?
- ★ How is the school developing or clarifying its Schoolwide Learning Expectations?
- ★ What is the plan for involving representatives of the school community in reviewing the instructional program with respect to the criteria and Schoolwide Learning Expectations?
- ★ How are the staff and other members of the school community taking an in-depth look at the program for *all* students: access to and participation in the core curriculum, support, and attainment of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations? What methods are they using?
 - Observing and examining what students are doing
 - Interviewing students and others
 - Examining pertinent student and other data
- ★ Is the School Action Improvement Plan based on findings of the Self-Study Committee and is it realistic, specific and meaningful with respect to the Schoolwide Learning Expectations? How has the school provided a "feedback loop" to all stakeholders regarding the Action Plan? Can the action steps be implemented with existing and/or anticipated resources?
- ★ How will the schedule for the visit permit adequate dialogue regarding findings with the Leadership Team and Self-Study Committees so that the necessary trust and rapport for communication and collaboration is built?
- ★ How will the Leadership Team ensure that there is a workable follow-up process to implement and monitor the School Improvement Action Plan?

2. Self-Study Coordinator and Principal make arrangements for the Visiting Committee

The Self-Study Coordinator and principal arrange adequate workspace for the Visiting Committee. An area for exhibit/evidence materials that support the Self-Study should also be provided. Current electronic technology and copy services are to be available to the Visiting Committee.

3. After the Self-Study Report is completed, the Self-Study Coordinator, Principal, and Visiting Committee Chairperson finalize the schedule for the Visit

The completed Self-Study report is presented to the Visiting Committee at their previsit meeting, which takes place at least four to five weeks prior to their Visit.

4. During the month prior to the Visit, the Self-Study Coordinator and the Leadership Team continue discussion of the implementation of the School Improvement Action Plan

Faculty, staff and other stakeholders review the School Improvement Action Plan, In-depth Study Report, and the reports by the Self-Study Committee. Using this information, the Leadership Team continues to refine the School Improvement Action Plan. The Leadership Team will share these ideas with the Visiting Committee.

5. Self-Study Coordinator and Principal complete preparation for the Visiting Committee Visit

Self-Study Coordinator and principal verify all preliminary Visiting Committee arrangements: housing, typing, word processing/copy services, school map, classroom schedule, parking facilities, name tags, etc. Self-Study Coordinator and principal ensure the availability of a secure and private workroom and the organization of the exhibits.

6. During the three-day Visit, the stakeholders discuss specific issues of the Self-Study with the Visiting Committee

The Visiting Committee will have extensive dialogue with the Self-Study Committees and the Leadership Team. Important to this dialogue will be the Visiting Committee's examination and understanding of the information and evidence that supported the Visiting Committee's findings. Throughout the Visit, the Visiting Committee Chairperson will regularly communicate with the principal and the Self-Study Coordinator regarding the visiting team's findings.

7. The Visiting Committee prepares a report and presents findings to the school community

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ACCREDITATION TERM
DETERMINATION

ACCREDITATION TERM DETERMINATION

As in the past, the Visiting Committee will recommend a term of accreditation, which will be jointly acted upon by the WCEA and WASC Commissions. Possible terms are: six years; six years with a review; a three, two, one year; or denial. The basic concepts addressed in the *Process for School Improvement* and the term determination are:

- ✦ What are students doing and learning currently based upon the WASC/WCEA criteria and the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?
- ✦ Is the school utilizing its resources to support high achievement of these Schoolwide Learning Expectations for all students?

The term of accreditation will be based upon the following factors:

1. Involvement and collaboration of stakeholders in doing the Self-Study that accomplishes the five Key Outcomes of the Self-Study.
2. The defining of the school's purpose through Schoolwide Learning Expectations and academic standards.
3. The use of a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, and analyze student performance data.
4. The acceptable progress by all students toward clearly defined Schoolwide Learning Expectations, academic standards, and other institutional and/or governing authority expectations.
5. *An Organization for Student Learning* that supports high achievement for all students.
6. *Curriculum and Instruction* that supports high achievement for all students.
7. *Support for Student Personal, Spiritual, and Academic Growth* that supports high achievement for all students.
8. *Resource Management and Development* that supports high achievement for all students.
9. The alignment of a long-range schoolwide Action Plan to the school's areas for critical growth in order to support high achievement of all students.
10. The capacity to implement and monitor the School Improvement Action Plan.
11. The use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive school improvement.

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VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT
FORMAT

VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT FORMAT

Chapter I: Student/Community Profile

- ✦ Comment on significant findings revealed by the student/community profile and/or other pertinent items discovered during the Visit that were not included in the profile. (Suggested length: ½ - 1 page.)

Chapter II: Progress Report (Suggested length: 2-3 pages.)

- ✦ Briefly comment on the school's major changes and follow-up process since the last Self-Study.
- ✦ Briefly comment on the progress made on all Action Plans since the last full Visit.
- ✦ Briefly comment on the progress made on all recommendations ('93 Procedures) or critical areas for growth and on the School Improvement Action Plan (PSI) from the last full Visit.

Chapter III: Self-Study Process (Suggested length: 1-2 pages.)

- ✦ Comment on the school's Self-Study process with respect to the Key Outcomes and accuracy.
 - Did the school accomplish the five Key Outcomes of the Self-Study?
 1. The involvement and collaboration of school/community members in the Self-Study;
 2. The clarification of the school's mission, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations;
 3. The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning and spiritual development with respect to the criteria and Schoolwide Learning Expectations;
 4. The development of a School Improvement Action Plan that addresses identified growth needs (critical areas for follow-up); and
 5. The development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the School Improvement Action Plan.
 - Does the Self-Study accurately reflect the school's program for students?
 - Does the observable evidence reflect a sampling of what ALL students are doing and producing with respect to the WASC/WCEA criteria and the school's Schoolwide Learning Expectations?
 - Does the observable evidence or lack of evidence support the school's identified Areas for Growth?

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Report

- ✦ For each Self-Study area:
 - A. Organization for Student Learning (seven criteria)
 - B. Curriculum and Instruction (three criteria for general, religion, and in-depth, per diocesan policy)
 - C. Support for Student Personal, Spiritual, and Academic Growth (two criteria)

D. Resource Management and Development (two criteria)
Discuss the school program and the school support for student learning through what currently exists.
(Suggested length for each category: 2-4 pages.)

- Highlight areas of strength (if any).
- Highlight the areas for growth (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.
- Include important evidence about student learning from the Self-Study and the Visit that supports these strengths and key issues.

✦ Synthesize the strengths and areas for growth from the criteria included in each of the four categories into School's Strengths and School's Critical Areas for Growth. Include the information given below.
(Suggested length: 2-3 pages)

- General comments about the emerging School's Strengths and School's Areas for Growth
- List school's Areas of Strength
- List school's Critical Areas for Growth that will do the following:
 - Support those areas already identified by the school in the Action Plan sections.
 - Strengthen those identified areas in the Action Plan sections.
 - Address additional areas identified by the Visiting Committee.

Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement (Suggested length: 1 - 2 pages.)

✦ Comment on the following school improvement issues:

- Adequacy of the School Improvement Action Plan and the degree to which it addresses the Critical Areas for Growth summarized in Chapter IV. Include a one-page summary of the School Improvement Action Plan. Consider these questions:
 - Do the Action Plan sections address the Critical Areas for Growth?
 - Will the Action Plan steps enhance student learning?
 - Is the Action Plan feasible within existing resources?
 - Is there sufficient commitment to the School Improvement Action Plan?
- Existing factors that will support school improvement.
- Impediments to school improvement that the school will need to overcome in order to accomplish any of the School Improvement Action Plan sections.
- Soundness of the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishment of the School Improvement Action Plan.

WASC/WCEA

Visiting Committee Member Handbook

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR VISIT

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR VISIT

This sample schedule will have to be adjusted by the school and Visiting Committee Chair to fit the local situation. In this process, it is very important to allow enough time for extensive dialogue with the Self-Study Committees and the Leadership Team. This discussion will include the examination of evidence used to determine growth needs by the stakeholders. The focus of the subject area and staff meetings will be to understand the information and evidence that lends support to the schoolwide findings. The Visiting Committee Chairperson should be regularly communicating with the principal and Self-Study Coordinator to discuss the progress of the Visit.

Previsit (Usually 4-5 weeks prior to the Visit.)

Schedule to be determined.

First Day

7:30 - 8:00	Meeting with Leadership Team (Total Visiting Committee Team)
8:00 - 12:00	Viewing of evidence: class/program observations, interviews, examination of student work
8:00 - 8:45	Meeting with Organization for Student Learning Self-Study Committee (Visiting Committee subcommittee)
10:00 - 10:45	Meeting with Pastor (Visiting Committee subcommittee)
11:15 - 12:00	Meeting with Student Committee (Visiting Committee subcommittee)
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch - Informally talk with students and staff
1:00 - 2:30	Gathering of evidence: class/program observations, interviews, examination of student work
3:00 - 4:00	Meeting with Curriculum and Instruction Committee (Total Visiting Committee)
4:00 - 6:00	Visiting Committee work
6:00 - 7:00	Dinner: Visiting Committee alone
7:00 -	Meeting with parents and School Advisory Group

Second Day

7:30 - 8:00	Meeting with Leadership Team
8:00 - 11:00	Gathering of evidence: class/program observations, interviews, examination of student work
8:00 - 8:45	Meeting with Resource Management and Development Committee (Visiting Committee subcommittee)
11:00 - 12:00	Visiting Committee work

12:00 - 1:00	Lunch - Informal contact with students, faculty, and staff
1:00 - 3:00	Gathering of evidence: class/program observations, interviews, examination of student work
	Visiting Committee work
	Meeting with the Support for Personal, Spiritual, and Academic Growth Committee (Visiting Committee subcommittee)
3:00 - 4:00	Meeting with In-depth Study Committees (Visiting Committee subcommittee)
6:00	Dinner - Visiting Committee works on draft of its report

Third Day

7:30 - 8:30	Meeting with Leadership Team (Total Visiting Committee)
8:30 - 11:00	Completion of draft report, contacting school staff as needed. Prior to the first reading, provide copies of draft report to those who will attend the 11:00 meeting. Begin work on Recommendation for Term of Accreditation and the Confidential Documentation and Justification Statement.
11:00 - 12:00	Meeting with the Leadership Team, Pastor, Arch/Diocesan personnel to discuss/clarity findings of Visit and the Visiting Committee Report
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch
1:00 - 3:00	Closure on issues raised in the earlier session discussing the draft Visiting Committee Report. The Visiting Committee may revise the report as a result of this meeting. Visiting Committee members complete the final draft of their report.
	Completion of the Recommendation for a Term of Accreditation and the Confidential Documentation and Justification Statement.
	Team members complete Chairperson Evaluations.
	Visiting Committee discusses and decides how Visiting Committee Report will be communicated to the school community.
3:00 - 3:30	Report to faculty and staff
	The Visiting Committee Report is not read verbatim. The findings of the report are summarized and reported to the faculty and staff.

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Visiting Committee Member Handbook

VISITING COMMITTEE MEMBER CHECKLIST

VISITING COMMITTEE MEMBER CHECKLIST

Previsit Preparation

- _____ 1. Receive first letter from Visiting Committee Chairperson to confirm dates and times of previsit and Visit.
- _____ 2. Participate in mandatory diocesan Visiting Team training session.
- _____ 3. Attend previsit meeting at school site approximately 4-5 weeks prior to actual Visit.
- _____ 4. Become aware of the Key Outcomes of the Self-Study followed by the school:
 - ★ The involvement and collaboration of school community members in the Self-Study.
 - ★ The clarification of the school's philosophy, mission, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.
 - ★ The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning with respect to the criteria.
 - ★ The development of a School Improvement Action Plan and integrated subject area/support program action steps to address identified growth needs.
 - ★ The development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the School Improvement Action Plan.
- _____ 5. Review the WASC/WCEA criteria, standards, suggested evidence, and appropriate curricular/educational references.
- _____ 6. Receive additional communications from Chairperson:
 - ★ Assigning writing tasks.
 - ★ Requesting the review of the criteria as the entire Self-Study report is analyzed.
 - ★ Requesting prior to the Visit, the writing of questions to pursue during the Visit and tentative narrative statements for assigned sections of the school report. **The Chair should receive these prior to the initial team meeting in order to compile a tentative Visiting Committee Report.**
 - ★ Providing a schedule for Visit
- _____ 7. Study the School Report, the Visiting Committee Member Handbook, and the reference cards.
- _____ 8. After receiving the School Report, complete preparation for the Visit:
 - ★ Review the criteria with respect to the analysis of the School Report; study other pertinent materials.
 - ★ Determine "matches" and "gaps" with appropriate criteria; critique Action Plan.

- ✦ Write questions regarding issues, concerns, clarifications and evidence that should be pursued during the Visit and develop tentative narratives for assigned sections of Visiting Committee report. **Send these to Visiting Committee Chair according to the schedule established at the previsit.**

_____ 9. Take the following materials to the Visit:

- ✦ *Process for School Improvement* manual (available on site)
- ✦ Reference cards
- ✦ Self-Study Report
- ✦ All notes
- ✦ Visiting Committee Member Handbook

_____ 10. Arrive on time for initial meeting and have no other commitments during the Visit.

The Visit: How Do We Know Students Are Learning? What Is The Actual Program For Students?

- _____ 1. Demonstrate a genuine interest in the school's welfare and a desire to be helpful. Establish rapport with staff.
- _____ 2. Utilize the concepts of the WASC/WCEA criteria as a comparison base throughout entire Visit.
- _____ 3. Look at the quality of program experienced by students and evidence of successful student learning - the degree to which the Schoolwide Learning Expectations are being accomplished. Evidence of student work should be reflective of the low achieving student, the average achieving student, and the high achieving student.
- _____ 4. Look for evidence of an ongoing process for school improvement.
- _____ 5. Let the program unfold, don't prejudge. Validate, verify, and document. Be aware of personal biases that can influence observation.
- _____ 6. Structure the gathering of evidence (class/program observations, interviews, examination of student work and other information, dialogue with subject area/support groups) so needed information is gained.
- _____ 7. Assure teachers that classroom visits are not evaluative, but are planned to observe the general instructional atmosphere and climate of the school.
- _____ 8. Frame open-ended questions to all school committee members and individuals to elicit information without reflecting a value judgment.
- _____ 9. Allow adequate time for responses and give appropriate feedback to questions.
- _____ 10. Concentrate on being a good listener. Be aware of nonverbal feedback.

- ____ 11. Meet and lead discussion with school Self-Study committees, which are assigned areas of writing responsibility. Allow adequate time for other Visiting Committee members to explore their concerns and for school staff members to highlight issues important to them. Visiting Committee members help all concerned to recognize the needs of the school and develop a desire to improve the instructional program

Note: Time is limited so don't overemphasize particular concerns. The goal is to clarify information already in the School Report and to secure information not yet provided.
- ____ 12. Don't allow pressure groups or individuals to distract you from the main task and schedule.
- ____ 13. Work cooperatively with all other Visiting Committee members as findings are discussed and decisions made.
- ____ 14. Write quality responses according to the suggested guidelines. Make sure they reflect the important concepts of the criteria in order to serve as guidelines for an effective educational curricular program.
- ____ 15. Provide regular feedback to the Leadership Team and other staff members regarding findings as a result of the Visit, not the Self-Study alone.
- ____ 16. Meet with the Leadership Team to present and *thoroughly discuss the synthesis of the concepts of the criteria, the Self-Study, and the findings* during the Visit, as reflected in the draft Visiting Committee Report.
- ____ 17. Meet with other Visiting Committee members to investigate any issues or questions raised during the Leadership Team meeting.
- ____ 18. Make necessary Visiting Committee Report modifications and bring to closure.
- ____ 19. Individually review each WASC/WCEA criterion within the four categories and overall findings. Individually make decisions regarding the quality of the school's educational program with respect to the four categories of criteria and the other factors impacting the term.
- ____ 20. Participate in the Visiting Committee discussion of the Recommendation for a Term of Accreditation with respect to the WASC/WCEA criteria categories and all findings.
- ____ 21. Assist the Chair in preparing the confidential Documentation and Justification Statement for the Commission ensuring that there is *alignment* among the recommended term, the Documentation and Justification Statement, and the Visiting Committee report.
- ____ 22. Complete Chair evaluation form.
- ____ 23. Participate in the presentation of the findings to the entire staff. Don't imply or discuss the recommended term of accreditation.
- ____ 24. Support and encourage the school in its ongoing follow-up.

WASC/WCEA

Visiting Committee Member Handbook

VISITING COMMITTEE
CHAIRPERSON CHECKLIST

VISITING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON CHECKLIST

The Chair will be appointed by the elementary WCEA Commissioner of the arch/diocese. The Chair should consult with that Commissioner for any clarifications and expectations specific to the diocese.

Previsit Preparation

- _____ 1. Attend mandatory Chairperson training.
- _____ 2. Study the school description, the *Process for School Improvement* manual, and the reference cards.
- _____ 3. Review the key outcomes to be accomplished through the Self-Study:
 - ✪ The involvement and collaboration of school/community members in the Self-Study.
 - ✪ The clarification of the school's mission, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.
 - ✪ The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning and spiritual development with respect to the criteria and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.
 - ✪ The development of a School Improvement Action Plan that addresses identified growth needs.
 - ✪ The development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the School Improvement Action Plan.
- _____ 4. Review the WASC/WCEA criteria, standards, suggested evidence, and appropriate curricular/educational references.
- _____ 5. Begin regular communication with the principal and Self-Study Coordinator to answer questions and give assistance.
- _____ 6. Arrange an initial one-day visit for the Chair, prior to the Previsit (optional). During that visit plan to meet with principal, Self-Study Coordinator, Leadership Team, and other staff members. Possibly speak briefly to entire staff.
- _____ 7. Communicate with school about the following issues (many of these can be discussed at the initial visit):
 - ✪ The calendar/timeline for the Self-Study process.
 - ✪ Orientation of staff/training of committee Chairpersons.
 - ✪ Committee organization/membership/designated criteria.
 - ✪ Set a date for the previsit:

- Is there active involvement of all certificated staff members, including administration, and strong representation of other school community groups?
- How is the Leadership Team taking an active role in facilitating the entire Self-Study process?
- ✦ Development of student/community profile:
 - Has the school involved and considered ALL student characteristics/subpopulations in the Self-Study process?
- ✦ Clarification of Schoolwide Learning Expectations:
 - What are the focal issues of the school? Where is the school in the process of developing/refining its Schoolwide Learning Expectations?
 - Are the Schoolwide Learning Expectations driving the work of the school? To what degree are they measurable? Note: It is expected that there will be a range/continuum in the achievement of these Schoolwide Learning Expectations.
 - Is the school assessing Schoolwide Learning Expectations with respect to the criteria?
- ✦ Progress since previous full Self-Study:
 - Is the school responding to each recommendation from the previous full Self-Study, recognizing that some recommendations may have been more helpful than others?
- ✦ Analysis of student program, both discipline-specific and support areas:
 - How has evidence of student learning been gathered and analyzed?
- ✦ Use of WASC/WCEA criteria and Schoolwide Learning Expectations, collection and analysis of evidence, synthesis of findings, and the writing of the Self-Study Committee summaries:
 - Are all certificated staff members/other representative school community members using the criteria and Schoolwide Learning Expectations as the basis for determining "what exists," and "where do we want to be?"
 - Is the information from the student/community profile being used to ensure that the comparison to the criteria is being conducted with respect to all students?
 - How are the certificated staff members and other school community members taking an in-depth look at the program for all students?

- How is this evidence being organized and used in the Self-Study committee discussions?
- How is additional evidence needed by the Self-Study committees being gathered and analyzed?
- ✦ Review of school report's table of contents, a sample Self-Study committee summary, and a School Improvement Action Plan section:
 - Does each Self-Study committee summary provide the critical findings and reference to the evidence that supports the identified growth needs and suggested "next steps"?
 - Is each target area of the School Improvement Action Plan supported by the School Report and are they realistic, specific and meaningful? Will the School Improvement Action Plan effectively guide the work of the school in ensuring quality learning for students? Can they be implemented within existing and/or anticipated resources? Do they include:
 - A statement of the areas of improvement?
 - Brief statement of the rationale for identifying this area?
 - Schoolwide Learning Expectations addressed?
 - Specific steps?
 - Timeline?
 - Person(s) responsible?
 - Resources?
 - Ways of assessing progress?
 - Means to report progress to all members of the school community?
- ✦ School's follow-up process:
 - Have the administrators, Self-Study Coordinator, Leadership Team and Arch/Diocesan representative begun discussion of a sound follow-up process that includes:
 - Ways of monitoring progress?
 - Accountability of all school community members?
 - Individual commitment?
 - Benchmarks/celebration of progress?

- ✦ Exhibit of representative evidence for the Visiting Committee:
 - How will exhibit materials that reflect the evidence analyzed in the Self-Study be organized for the Visiting Committee?
 - Will the evidence reflect:
 - A linkage to Schoolwide Learning Expectations and criteria?
 - A linkage to identified Critical Areas for Growth and School Improvement Action Plan?
 - All students?
 - Will the Visiting Committee be provided a general list of available evidence?
- ✦ The schedule for the Visit:
 - How can the schedule maximize time for dialogue with the Self-Study committees, the gathering of evidence (classroom observations, interviews, examination of student work) and meetings with In-depth Curriculum committees?
 - Does the schedule for the Visit permit regular dialogue with the Leadership Team regarding preliminary findings, thereby building the trust, rapport for ongoing communication, and collaboration?
- ✦ Visiting Committee work room (private) and exhibit/evidence area at the school site.
- ✦ Meeting room at school for committee meetings.
- ✦ Computer access and compatibility with system that the Chair will be using for draft report.
- ✦ Clerical support throughout process.
- ✦ Housing arrangements.
- ✦ Copies of previous Self-Study, mid-term report, and/or revisit committee report as well as other pertinent background materials.

____ 8. Receive roster of Visiting Committee members at least two months prior to Visit; begin communications i.e., letters, calls, fax.

- ✦ Send initial letter. Necessary materials will be distributed by WCEA Commissioner.
- ✦ Ask for preferred areas of coverage during the Visit (if Diocesan Commissioner has not done so).
- ✦ Remind members that they are required to participate in Visiting Committee training and to be present for previsit and full Visit.

- ____ 9. Maintain contact with school to determine:
- ★ If school needs further direct assistance.
 - ★ Progress on report, including actual critique of draft Self-Study Report and School Improvement Action Plan.
 - Self-check for Self-Study committees:
 - Do the summaries address all the important concepts of the criteria found within each category?
 - Is there an indication that appropriate evidence was collected to verify findings?
 - Was the comparison done with respect to evidence of student learning and success, the achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?
 - Will the School Improvement Action Plan section affect quality learning for all students and is it realistic?
 - ★ Progress on housing and other physical arrangements.
 - ★ Appropriate clerical support.
- ____ 10. Provide to Visiting Committee members at the previsit:
- ★ Writing assignments of areas to be covered.
 - ★ Review of the criteria as the entire Self-Study report is analyzed.
 - ★ Prior to Visit, require written determination of "matches" and "gaps."
 - ★ Prior to Visit, require written questions about issues, concerns, clarifications and evidence that should be pursued during the Visit.
 - ★ Prior to Visit, require written tentative narrative statements for assigned sections of Visiting Committee report. Note: The questions and tentative narrative statements should be sent to the Visiting Committee Chair prior to the Visit. The Chair will create a tentative report that will be used at the initial team meeting.
- ____ 11. Maintain regular contact with school to double-check the following:
- ★ Critique of School Report and School Improvement Action Plan. Once the visit begins, neither the Chair nor the Visiting Committee should request any further re-write of the School Report or the School Improvement Action Plan.

- ✦ School community understands the importance of adhering to published daily teaching schedules.
- ✦ Date school-hosted previsit.
- ✦ Preparation of reference/evidence materials for Visit.
- ✦ Receipt of list of reference/evidence.
- ✦ Availability and knowledge of clerical support.

_____ 12. Make final contact with Visiting Committee members:

- ✦ Offer assistance with understanding of assigned tasks and pre-writing.
- ✦ Remind members to send questions and tentative writing by the due date.
- ✦ Confirm initial meeting time.

_____ 13. Develop basic Visiting Committee Report format correlated to Self-Study Report chapters. Ahead of time begin writing the following: additional comments about pertinent items not included in the profile summary; response to school's Progress Report; comments on the Self-Study process with respect to accuracy and the degree to which the key outcomes have been met. Include all writing from the Visiting Committee members. *Have the tentative report ready for the initial Visiting Committee meeting at the beginning of the three-day Visit.*

_____ 14. Plan previsit orientation meeting for Visiting Committee members prior to initial meeting at school. The meeting covers:

- ✦ Purpose of Visit.
- ✦ Conducting the Visit in an atmosphere of collaborative and open communication.
- ✦ Emphasis upon criteria and Schoolwide Learning Expectations as the basis for the Self-Study and the Visit.
- ✦ Discussion of school direction(s) and where school is with respect to development/refinement of Schoolwide Learning Expectations.
- ✦ Discussion of Self-Study Report: trends/perceptions, (questions, concerns and tentative written comments); relationship to categories of criteria; and type of verification needed.
- ✦ Discussion of ways to gather evidence.
- ✦ Review overall schedule.
- ✦ Review of Accreditation Term Determination Worksheet and Recommendation for Term of Accreditation and Confidential Documentation and Justification Statement for the Commissions.

The Visit: How Do We Know Students Are Learning? What is the Actual Program For Students?

- ____ 1. Conduct orientation meeting for Visiting Committee members and review Visit schedule; distribute tentative report to team members.
- ____ 2. Conduct initial meeting with Leadership Team that includes a reflective discussion on the general perceptions gleaned from study of the School Report.
- ____ 3. Facilitate the Visit:
 - ★ Maintain a positive atmosphere.
 - ★ Keep to the task.
 - ★ Maintain open communication and collaboration at all times.
 - ★ Regularly communicate with the principal, Self-Study Coordinator, and Leadership Team.
 - ★ Ensure that all Visiting Committee members are active participants in the school committee meetings.
 - ★ Ensure that the gathering of evidence (classroom observations, interviews, examination of student work and other data, subject area/support group meetings) is occurring throughout the school.
 - ★ Ensure that no area is overlooked.
 - ★ Assist committee members.
 - ★ Stress with Visiting Committee the avoidance of prescriptive and "how we do it at our school" discussion.
 - ★ Lead all Visiting Committee discussions on the findings, relating them to the WASC/WCEA criteria in the four categories.
 - ★ Adhere as closely as possible to the published Visiting Committee schedule, and communicate any changes to all affected parties.
 - ★ Coordinate the preparation of the Visiting Committee Report.
- ____ 4. Facilitate the thorough discussion and synthesis of the key concepts of the criteria in the four categories, the school report, and the Visiting Committee findings at all Visiting Committee meetings during the three days.
- ____ 5. Regularly communicate with the principal, including the Leadership Team, about Visiting Committee findings.

- _____ 6. At the final meeting with the Leadership Team, facilitate the thorough discussion of the synthesis of the key concepts of the criteria, the Self-Study report, and the Visiting Committee findings, as reflected in the draft Visiting Committee Report.
- ✦ Ensure the Leadership Team has an opportunity to ask questions and clarify areas of the report.
 - ✦ Work with Visiting Committee members to discuss and investigate any issues or questions raised in the dialogue with the Leadership Team.
- _____ 7. Facilitate necessary Visiting Committee Report modifications and come to closure on Visiting Committee Report.
- _____ 8. Have Visiting Committee members individually review each WASC/WCEA criterion within the four categories. Have them individually make decisions regarding the quality of the school's educational program with respect to the four categories of criteria and the other factors impacting the term.
- _____ 9. Facilitate the Visiting Committee discussion of the term of accreditation that will be recommended to the WASC/WCEA Commissions.
- _____ 10. Coordinate the completion of the Recommendation for Term of Accreditation and the Confidential Documentation and Justification Statement for the Commissions.
- Ensure:
- ✦ Alignment between the Visiting Committee report, the recommended term, and the Documentation and Justification Statement.
 - ✦ Member signatures on the term sheet.
 - ✦ Brief description of the discussion and term option considered by the Visiting Committee.
 - ✦ A clearly stated rationale based upon factors impacting term of accreditation.
 - ✦ Member signatures on the signature page of the Visiting Committee Report.
- _____ 11. Have Visiting Committee members complete evaluation of Chairperson form.
- _____ 12. Edit final Visiting Committee Report with the assistance of the Visiting Committee members. Ensure all key topics of chapters are addressed.
- _____ 13. Facilitate the presentation of the Visiting Committee findings to the entire staff at the close of the Visit. Do not imply the recommended term of accreditation to the school staff.
- _____ 14. Continually stress the importance of immediate follow-up to integrate the Visiting Committee narrative suggestions and recommendations into the School Improvement Action Plan for yearly implementation and assessment.

After The Visit

- ____ 1. Send member evaluations to Arch/Diocesan Commissioner.
- ____ 2. Finalize the WASC/WCEA forms: The Recommended Term of Accreditation and the Documentation and Justification Statement for the Commissions. In addition, complete final editing on the Visiting Committee Report. Ensure that the school has the final copy of the Visiting Committee Report as soon as possible after Visit.
- ____ 3. The Visiting Committee Chairperson will submit to the WCEA Arch/Diocesan Commissioner:
 - ★ The requested number of Visiting Committee Reports including the original.
 - ★ One copy of the Visiting Committee Report on disk or CD.
 - ★ The requested number of Recommendation for Term and Documentation and Justification Statements including the original.
- ____ 4. Keep copies of **ALL** WASC/WCEA forms and the Visiting Committee Report.
- ____ 5. Send appropriate letters of appreciation.
- ____ 6. Communicate to Visiting Committee members the decision of the Commissions on the final accreditation term awarded to the school.

WASC/WCEA

Visiting Committee Member Handbook

APPENDICES

**Visiting Committee Previsit Preparation
WASC/WCEA Process for School Improvement
Previsit Worksheets**

Chapter I: Student/Community Profile

Directions: Use these previsit preparation worksheets to write questions (notes) about concerns, clarifications, and observable evidence to be pursued during the Visit.

These notes will be used in your Visiting Committee discussions and decisions on the critical areas of focus for evidence review during the Visit. In addition, these thoughts will assist you in the more formal writing of the tentative narrative statements for your assigned sections of the Visiting Committee Report.

➤ What appear to be significant findings revealed by the student/community profile?

➤ What are possible pertinent items that were not included that need to be explored with the school?

Chapter III: Self-Study Process

Directions: Use these previsit preparation worksheets to write questions (notes) about concerns, clarifications, and observable evidence to be pursued during the Visit.

These notes will be used in your Visiting Committee discussions and decisions on the critical areas of focus for evidence review during the Visit. In addition, these thoughts will assist you in the more formal writing of the tentative narrative statements for your assigned sections of the Visiting Committee Report.

- To what extent has the school accomplished the five Key Outcomes (See p.3 of the Visiting Committee Member Handbook) of the Self-Study?

- To what extent does the Self-Study accurately reflect the school's program for students?

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

Directions: Use these previsit preparation worksheets to write questions (notes) about concerns, clarifications, and observable evidence to be pursued during the Visit.

These notes will be used in your Visiting Committee discussions and decisions on the critical areas of focus for evidence review during the Visit. In addition, these thoughts will assist you in the more formal writing of the tentative narrative statements for your assigned sections of the Visiting Committee Report.

A: Organization For Student Learning

A1 School Purpose

To what extent has the school established a clear statement of philosophy that reflects a commitment to Catholic identity, thoroughness of instruction, a focus on the needs of the whole person, parents as primary educators, teachers as facilitators of learning, and recognition of the dignity of all members of the school community?

A2 Governance

To what extent does the school administration seek input/participation from members of the school community, adopt policies which are consistent with the school purpose and drive the learning expectations for the school, delegate implementation to the professional staff and is committed to sharing the Catholic vision, mission, and goals?

A3 Leadership

To what extent does the school leadership encourage the cultivation of Catholic Christian values and the spiritual formation of the school community, focus the energies of the school on student achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, empower the staff, and ensure shared accountability for student learning?

A4 Staff

To what extent are the school leadership and staff professionally qualified, dedicated to the school's philosophy and mission, and committed to ongoing professional development that will promote student learning? To what extent are the administration and staff prepared to lead by example and work collaboratively with parishes to create communities of faith?

A5 School Environment

To what extent is the school a safe, healthy, nurturing environment, which fosters community and the achievement of religious and educational goals and is characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for each student and a respect for diversity?

A6 Reporting Student Progress

To what extent does the school leadership and staff regularly review student progress toward accomplishing the Schoolwide Learning Expectations and report student progress to the rest of the school community?

A7 School Improvement Process

To what extent does the school leadership facilitate school improvement as a process which (1) drives plans of action that embody quality learning for students, (2) has school community commitment and involvement and (3) effectively guides the work of the school; and does the leadership and instructional staff in cooperation with the rest of the school community demonstrate accountability through the monitoring of the School Improvement Action Plan implementation?

Areas of Strength for Organization for Student Learning

Areas for Growth for Organization for Student Learning

Evidence that Supports the Strengths and Areas for Growth

B: Curriculum and Instruction

B1 What Students Learn

To what extent does the school provide a challenging, comprehensive and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose, strengthens Catholic identity and results in the student achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

The learning expectations adopted by the school are addressed as follows:

B2 How Students Learn

To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning and formational experiences, which actively engage students and are consistent with the school's philosophy and expectations?

B3 How Assessment is Used

- Is teacher and student use of assessment frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process?
- Are the assessment results the basis for measurement of each student's progress toward the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?
- Are the assessment results the basis for regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction?
- Are the assessment results the basis for the allocation of resources?

Areas of Strength for Curriculum and Instruction

Areas for Growth for Curriculum and Instruction

Evidence that Supports the Strengths and Areas for Growth

C: Support for Student Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

C1 Student Connectedness

To what extent are students connected within the faith community to a system of support services, and activities and opportunities to assist them in meeting the challenges of the curricular/co-curricular program in order to achieve the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

C2 Parent/Community Involvement

To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's established support system for students?

Areas of Strength for Support for Student Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

Areas for Growth for Support for Student Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

Evidence that Supports the Strengths and Areas for Growth for Student Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

D: Resource Management and Development

D1 Resources

To what extent are the resources available to the school sufficient to sustain the school program and reflect sound financial practices and responsible stewardship?

D2 Resource Planning

To what extent do the governing authority and the school execute responsible resource planning for the future?

Areas of Strength for Resource Management and Development

Areas for Growth for Resource Management and Development

Evidence That Supports the Strengths and Areas for Growth for Resource Management and Development

Synthesis of Schoolwide Areas of Strength and Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up

General Comments:

Schoolwide Areas of Strength:

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Growth:

CONFIDENTIAL

**Recommendation For Term of Accreditation
(Catholic Elementary Schools)**

Please type or use word processor to facilitate copying and legibility.
(In the event of a formal appeal, this document will be provided to the school principal.)

Name of school visited: _____

Enrollment: _____ Grades to be accredited: _____ Self-Study form used: _____

Address of school: _____

Name of school district/diocese: _____

Date of visit: _____

	A Term of Accreditation For Six Years: A term of six years with an annual Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report submitted to the arch/diocese.
	A Term of Accreditation For Six Years With A Review: A term of six years with an annual Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report submitted to the arch/diocese, and during the third year of the six year term a mid-term summary progress report on the schoolwide critical areas for growth submitted to the WCEA Commission.
	A Term of Accreditation For Three Years: A term of three years with an annual Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report and a one-day revisit by a two-member committee during the third year. (Annual Progress Report submitted to the arch/diocese.)
	A Term of Accreditation For One or Two Years: A term of one or two years with an annual Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report and a one-day revisit to serve as a "warning" that unless prompt attention is given to the schoolwide critical areas for growth, and serious attention to the total report, accreditation may be denied. (Annual Progress monitored by arch/diocese.)
	Denial of Accreditation: Denial of accreditation based on conditions detailed in the Visiting Committee Report.

Signatures

_____	_____
Committee Member	Committee Member (WASC Representative)
_____	_____
Committee Member	Committee Member (WASC Representative)
_____	_____
Committee Member	Committee Member (WASC Representative)
_____	_____
Committee Member	Committee Member (WASC Representative)

_____	_____	_____	_____
Committee CHAIRPERSON	Date	Office Phone #	Home Phone #

The Justification Statement and Recommendation for a Term of Accreditation

This is a confidential report. Unless the school contests the Visiting Committee Report, the contents of the Justification Statement are known only to the Visiting Committee, the Arch/Diocesan Superintendent, the WCEA Commissioners, and the WASC Commission.

The Justification Statement closely follows the WASC/WCEA criteria and purposes for school evaluation. Committee members are asked to indicate the degree to which the school fulfills the criteria and supporting areas of strength and supporting critical areas for growth that support their decisions.

The rationale for the term of accreditation depends upon the degree to which the criteria are fulfilled in the Visiting Committee Report and the consensus of the Visiting Committee.

Each member of the Visiting Committee must sign the Justification Statement before departure. The Visiting Committee chairperson sends the original copy of this document to the Arch/Diocesan WCEA Commissioner.

SAMPLE

Documentation and Justification Statement

For proper processing, please complete the information in the box:

Chair Name	Name of City of School Visited	
Chair's Work Phone	Chair's Home Phone	Alternative Number
E-mail Address (if applicable)		

On the following pages, circle the rating that best fits the results of the Self-Study and the Visit that was selected through Visiting Committee dialogue and consensus.

- Highly Effective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provide evidence that this factor has had a high degree of impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
- Effective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provide evidence that this factor has had a satisfactory level of impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
- Somewhat Effective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provide evidence that this factor has had a limited impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
- Ineffective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provide evidence that this factor has had little or no impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.

Also, on the following pages, provide a brief narrative that describes the degree to which the school supports student learning through each category of criteria.

An accreditation term will be based upon a school demonstrating the following:

1. **Involvement and collaboration of stakeholders in doing the Self-Study that accomplishes the Key Outcomes of the Self-Study.**

Visiting Committee Rating: **Highly Effective** **Effective** **Somewhat Effective** **Ineffective**

Narrative Rationale:

2. **The defining of the school's purpose through Schoolwide Learning Expectations and academic standards.**

Visiting Committee Rating: **Highly Effective** **Effective** **Somewhat Effective** **Ineffective**

Narrative Rationale:

3. **The use of a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, and analyze student performance data.**

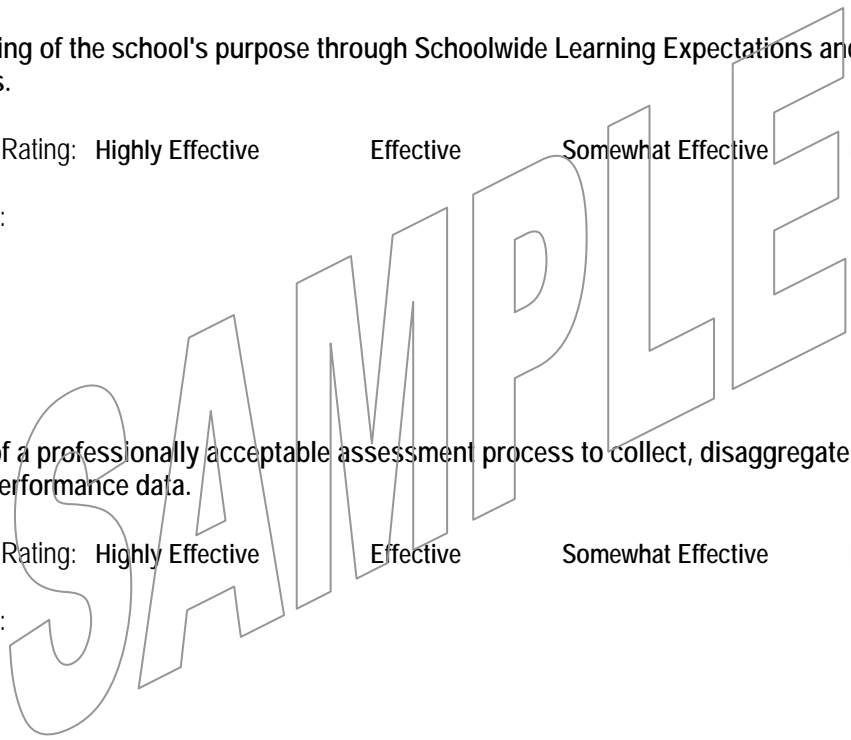
Visiting Committee Rating: **Highly Effective** **Effective** **Somewhat Effective** **Ineffective**

Narrative Rationale:

4. **The acceptable progress by all students toward clearly defined Schoolwide Learning Expectations, academic standards, and other institutional and/or governing authority expectations.**

Visiting Committee Rating: **Highly Effective** **Effective** **Somewhat Effective** **Ineffective**

Narrative Rationale:



5. ***An Organization for Student Learning*** that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

6. ***Curriculum and Instruction*** that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

7. ***Support for Student Personal, Spiritual, and Academic Growth*** that supports high achievement for all students.

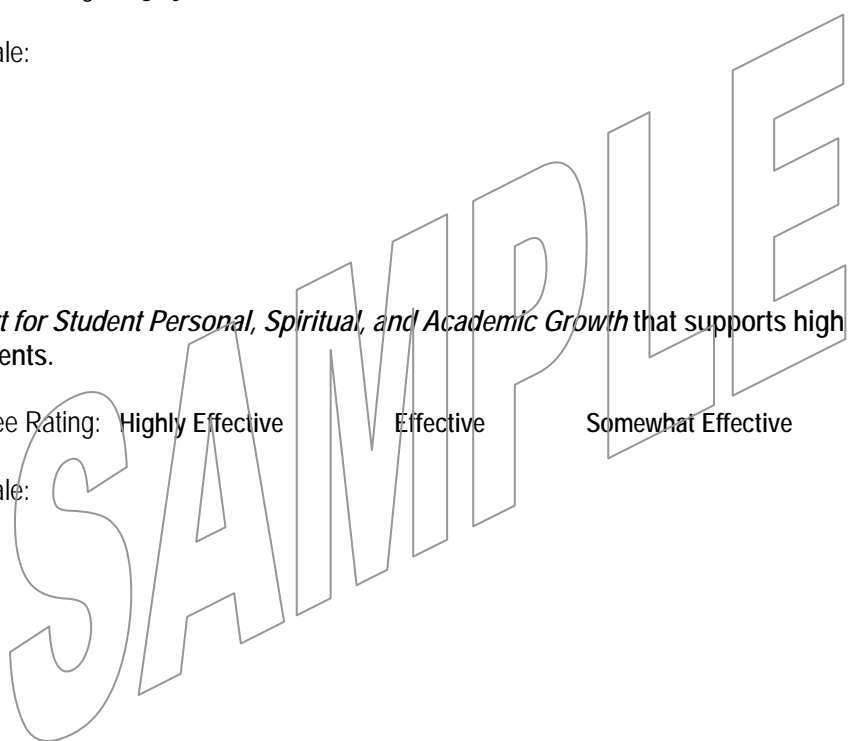
Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

8. ***Resource Management and Development*** that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:



9. The alignment of a long-range schoolwide Action Plan to the school's critical areas for growth to support high achievement of all students.

Visiting Committee Rating: **Highly Effective** **Effective** **Somewhat Effective** **Ineffective**

Narrative Rationale:

10. The capacity to implement and monitor the schoolwide Action Plan.

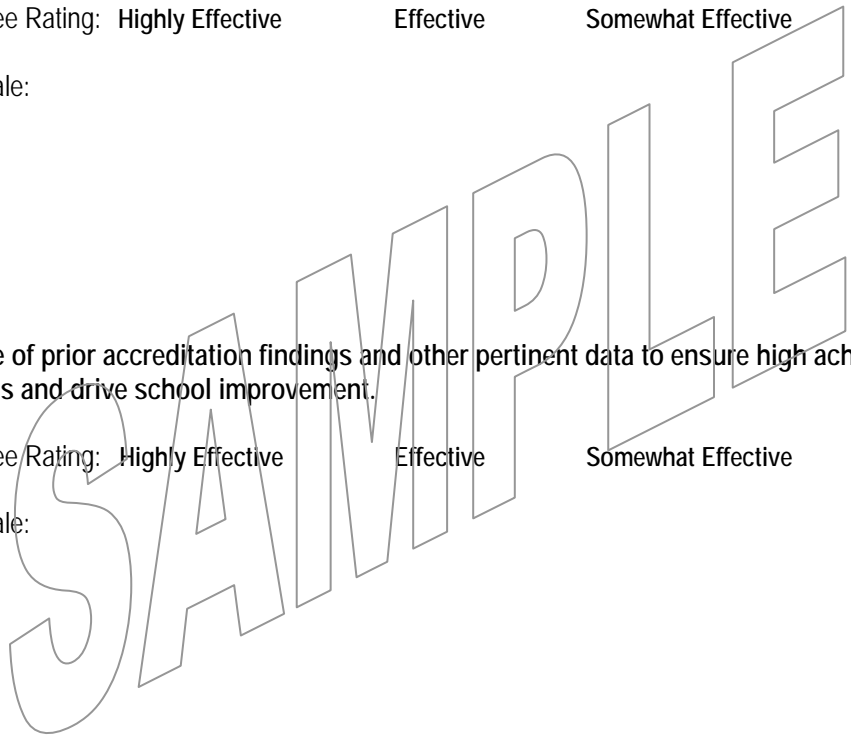
Visiting Committee Rating: **Highly Effective** **Effective** **Somewhat Effective** **Ineffective**

Narrative Rationale:

11. The use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive school improvement.

Visiting Committee Rating: **Highly Effective** **Effective** **Somewhat Effective** **Ineffective**

Narrative Rationale:



Provide a brief narrative, which summarizes the Visiting Committee's rationale for the recommended term.
(If there is an unresolved minority opinion, please indicate and explain.)

- Accreditation term options seriously considered
- Reasons for the *term recommended*

In the comments, reflect upon the following:

- The Visiting Committee's discussions and process (summarize as needed in the narrative)
- The degree to which students are learning
- The strength and growth needs of the school in all areas of the program
- The capacity of the school to implement and monitor the Action Plan

SAMPLE

Accreditation Term Determination Worksheet for WASC/WCEA Elementary Schools

Directions

1. Discuss the evidence reviewed through the Self-Study and the visit for each of the factors. Particularly examine the schoolwide strengths and the critical areas for follow-up.
2. Individually, read the factors and the supporting rubrics. Mark an "X" for the most appropriate rating in the box provided.
3. As a Visiting Committee come to a consensus on the most appropriate rating. NOTE: The rubrics are guides to assist in the synthesis of the Visiting Committee's findings for the Self-Study and Visit. Other points may need to be brought into the discussion.
4. Complete the official "Documentation and Justification Statement."

- Highly Effective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provide evidence that this factor has had a high degree of impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
- Effective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provide evidence that this factor has had a satisfactory level of impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
- Somewhat Effective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provide evidence that this factor has had a limited impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
- Ineffective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provide evidence that this factor has had little or no impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.

An accreditation term will be based upon a school demonstrating the following:	Highly Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
1. Involvement and collaboration of stakeholders in doing the Self-Study that accomplish the five key outcomes of the Self-Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All school instructional staff and other stakeholders involved in data review, analysis and dialogue about perceived strengths and areas of growth ■ Self-Study occurs in an environment of ongoing systemic analysis of the school's effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All school instructional staff and other stakeholders involved in data review, analysis and dialogue about perceived strengths and areas of growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Partial involvement of all school instructional staff and other stakeholders in the in-depth review, analysis and dialogue of data and information to determine schoolwide strengths and critical areas for growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of involvement of all instructional staff and other stakeholders in an in-depth review of data and information
2. Defining of the schools purpose through Schoolwide Learning Expectations and academic standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All stakeholders involved in a consensus building process that determined the Schoolwide Learning Expectations based on a clearly understood vision and purpose ■ Understanding and buy-in of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations by all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Process involved all administrative/ instructional staff and some of the other stakeholders ■ Clearly understood vision and purpose ■ Understanding and buy-in of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations by most instructional staff and other stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Process focused on a leadership team developing the Schoolwide Learning Expectations ■ Clearly understood vision and purpose; however, need for further consensus and understanding of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations by all school administrative/instructional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Administrative team developed the Schoolwide Learning Expectations ■ Lack of understanding of the school's purpose and the relationship to the Schoolwide Learning Expectations ■ Lack of understanding of the

An accreditation term will be based upon a school demonstrating the following:	Highly Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
	stakeholders ■ Quality of the developed indicators that assist in the measurability of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations ■ Staff understand the importance of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations and their integral relationship to the academic standards	■ Staff currently working on indicators that assist in the measurability of quality for the Schoolwide Learning Expectations ■ Staff gaining greater understanding of the importance of Schoolwide Learning Expectations and their relationship to academic standards	staff and other stakeholders ■ School administrative/instructional staff and other stakeholders just beginning to understand the importance of defining indicators of quality for the Schoolwide Learning Expectations and relationship between goals and academic standards	relationship between Schoolwide Learning Expectations and academic standards
3. The use of a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, and analyze student performance data	■ Appropriate disaggregation of all data with clear supporting interpretations ■ Trends and possible issues identified ■ Disaggregated data used by the instructional staff and all other stakeholders as an integral part of the Self-Study process	■ Data disaggregated where possible with clear supporting interpretations ■ Trends and possible issues identified ■ Disaggregated data used by the instructional staff and other stakeholders	■ Some data disaggregated but with unclear or limited interpretations ■ Trends and possible issues identified to a limited degree ■ Disaggregated data presented to staff and a few other stakeholders in a general manner	■ Incomplete data presented and little interpretation provided for instructional staff and others ■ Data summarized for Self-Study as time permitted and was not used throughout the Self-Study process
4. Acceptable progress by all students toward clearly defined Schoolwide Learning Expectations, academic standards, and other institutional and/or governing authority expectations	■ Multiple measures show acceptable progress for all students - i.e., all subgroups of students	■ Awareness of the subgroups of students for which stronger achievement is needed and multiple measures show growth targets being reached for these students	■ Multiple measures show growth targets are not being reached for many subgroups of students	■ Growth targets just beginning to be defined and addressed ■ Multiple measures indicate student achievement is not occurring for many subgroups of students
5. Organization for Student Learning				
6. Curriculum and Instruction				
7. Support for Personal, Spiritual, and Academic Growth				

An accreditation term will be based upon a school demonstrating the following:	Highly Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
8. Resource Management and Development				
9. The alignment of a long-range Schoolwide Action Plan to address the school's critical areas for growth to support high achievement of all students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analysis of all appropriate data/information about student achievement, school operation and program supports the identified prioritized growth areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analysis of most data/information about student achievement, school operation, and program supports the identified prioritized growth areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analysis of some data/information about student achievement, school operation and program supports the identified growth areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analysis of little, if any, data/information about student achievement and program supports the identified prioritized growth areas
10. The capacity to implement and monitor the Schoolwide Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Process that includes both formative and summative evaluation in place ■ Plan developed collaboratively ■ All stakeholders aware and consent to be involved in implementation ■ Actions will be evaluated in terms of impact on student achievement and results shared regularly with all stakeholders ■ Evaluation results will be used to identify priorities and further actions for improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Process includes some formative evaluation but focus is mainly summative ■ Plan developed collaboratively ■ General awareness and consent to be involved in implementation ■ Plan evaluated annually ■ School staff and periodically other stakeholders informed of action plan progress ■ Actions may be evaluated in terms of student achievement and other factors ■ Evaluation results used to identify further actions for improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ General understanding by school administrative and instructional staff about the need for implementation ■ Link of Action Plan to student learning weak, not clearly understood by administrative and instructional staff and other stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Process of implementation not clarified as to who and what will be accomplished ■ Understanding of need and value of action plan linked to high student achievement not understood by administrative and instructional staff and other stakeholders
11. The use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and to drive school improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ongoing systemic improvement integral to school's culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addressing prior accreditation findings occurs, but not rooted in systemic change at school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sporadic addressing of prior accreditation findings occurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Little, if any, addressing of prior accreditation findings

NOTE

The following appendices provide samples of a Visiting Committee Report, a Documentation and Justification Statement, and a Recommendation for a Term of Accreditation for two schools:

- 1) a school that received a recommended term of six years with a review and
- 2) a school that received a recommended term of three years.

It should be clearly understood that these samples are not necessarily models; they are examples.

The WCEA Commissioners believe these samples demonstrate a Visiting Committee's balanced judgment of the degree to which the school met the eleven criteria (see p. 23, "Accreditation Term Determination") based on the evidence documented in the school's Self-Study and revealed during the Visit.

Most importantly, Visiting Committees should recognize in these examples, and strive to emulate, consistency and alignment among the Visiting Committee Report, Justification and Documentation Statement, and Recommendation for Term of Accreditation. This alignment is achieved by the consistent application of the eleven criteria to the school's unique community and mission.

**THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING COMMITTEE**

St. School
Street
City, State, Zip

(Arch)Diocese of

Prepared for
The Accrediting Commission for Elementary Schools

Submitted to
Western Catholic Educational Association
and
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

PROCESS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
(Date)

Visiting Committee Roster

Name of School
City, State

Dates of Visit

Name
Position
School
Address

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Position
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Chapter I The Student/Community Profile

The school community profile was developed as a cooperative effort by (*Name of School*) staff. The profile was based on census information, surveys and demographic information. This profile gives a clear overview of the school and its surrounding areas. In addition this profile gives a clear picture of the goals of the administration, faculty, staff, students, and parents.

(*Name of School*) is a pre-school to 8th single-grade school in the (*Name of Diocese*). The school was founded in (*year*) and staffed by the sisters of (*Name of Order*). The school opened with an enrollment of 140 students. The largest enrollment of (*Name of School*) was in 1964 with 280. Enrollment steadily declined after this year and with costs of Catholic education rising, the school was forced to close in (*year*). After (*# of*) years of being closed, (*Name of School*) reopened its doors in September, (*year*) with 30 students. It began with a pre-school and kindergarten. Within a year grades 2-6 were opened and the school was once again complete. The (*Name of Order*) returned to staff the school. The school was rededicated as a pre-school to 8th grade Catholic school in January of (*year*). Enrollment rose through the 1980's with additional buildings added to accommodate the growth. In the early 1990's costs began to rise again and enrollment took a slight plunge. Major financial support from the parish, a newly formed school board, and active fundraising by the Parent Club have been instrumental in keeping (*Name of School*) open and alive in the community of (*Name of City*). The major reason for low enrollment in the 1980's and 1990's was that (*Name of City*) did not grow as a community. The first evidence of true growth has come with the recent establishment of new housing projects. (*Name of City*) is now on the path for sustained growth.

Of the families that attend (*Name of School*), 91% are Catholic and, of these, 87% belong to the home parish. Other parishes represented are _____. The majority of parents are blue collar workers with a strong emphasis in the _____ industry. The community enjoys a rich ethnic tradition that permeates the school environment and activities. The _____ support the school with strong traditions and they support the school financially with proceeds from the (*Name of School*) fiesta in September.

The school staff is committed to the Catholic identity of the school. The surveys and interviews reflected the countless hours all staff spends with students in helping them succeed at (*Name of School*). In addition the faculty develops activities that are student- centered and focus on the great traditions of (*Name of School*). The survey reflected the belief of the faculty that a well-developed curriculum was needed to strengthen student achievement.

Parent involvement is a hallmark of (*Name of School*). The school board is actively involved in long range planning and implementation of the five-year plan. The parent club raises over \$110,000 each year to support the budget of the school. In addition the parents are active community and parish leaders, keeping the awareness of (*Name of School*) alive in (*Name of City*). The parents in the surveys and interviews expressed their love for the school, how pleased they are with the Catholic identity of the school, and how much they value the teachers. Their main concern is how to keep the teachers at (*Name of School*) so that this great learning environment for their students will remain.

Students love their school. They expressed both in their surveys and especially through their interviews how much they feel like a family at (*Name of School*). They expressed how well their teachers explain lessons to them, that they are challenged to do their best, that the teachers are always there to help after school, that there are many activities for the students that the Student Council gets to plan and that they love learning about their faith. The students' greatest fear is attending public high school and not being a member of (*Name of School*) community. They expressed that they feel the teachers will be there for them even when they are in high school.

The pastor is especially supportive of the school. His survey reflects how much he knows about the school and how he values its existence in the parish. The interview with the pastor supported his survey comments. He is especially pleased with the many ways the students are involved in the parish and how actively they participate in the liturgy.

He is also pleased with the hard work and fundraising success of the school board and parent club. He demonstrates his continued support with a strong financial commitment to the school.

(Name of School) is participating in the *Process for School Improvement* accreditation in a pilot year. The community profile was well done providing a strong base for the team to use when reading and validating the Self-Study.

Chapter II Progress Report

At the time of the last WASC/WCEA visitation at *(Name of School)* in *(Year)*, there were six major recommendations and 33 minor recommendations. Most of the thirty-three minors are reflections of the six majors. *(Name of School)* received an accreditation term of six years. Response to the Progress Report is done here in narrative form due to the number of recommendations and the many details written about the achievement of each one. The actual details can be found in Chapter 2 of the Self-Study. The narrative response is as follows:

Procedures were developed to annually review and revise the Constitution and By-laws of the Board of Education so that the Board members would have a clearer understanding of their roles in the decision making process. Having met, the administration and Board changed the school name from *(Name of School) Education Center* to *(Name of School)*. Biannually, the Board has attended a retreat to discuss the decision making process, to understand the Board's advisory nature, and to clarify the role of the members.

The administration and faculty implemented a formal written discipline program to ensure continuity, consistency, and uniformity in discipline throughout all grade levels. The staff reviewed diocesan behavioral guidelines and Christian Life Skills, discussed discipline policies and procedures, and viewed the Harry Wong video series before designing their discipline program and publishing it in the Parent/Student Handbook. They renamed Behavior Guidelines - The Valuing Process. They developed a student discipline report for teachers to inform parents, and also developed a step by step approach for handling repeat discipline problems. The faculty and staff trained with Lee Canter's Assertive Discipline model and developed consequences and rewards. New faculty and staff continue to be trained in Assertive Discipline.

A broad scope and sequence with goals and objectives for all curriculum areas was developed and implemented by the administration and faculty. A comprehensive language arts curriculum, encompassing the scope and sequence, was adopted for grades K-5, and new reading texts were selected. The math curriculum was revised and reviewed. The faculty created a formal list of Schoolwide Learning Expectations. They also developed religion and science Schoolwide and Grade Level Expectations. New music, visual arts, and physical education curricula were also developed.

The administration and faculty were asked to work towards designing a multi-year plan to incorporate current computer technology in the classroom for success in the twenty-first century. The School Board established a technology committee to develop a 3-5 year technology plan. The entire plan has been met. It included a new computer lab, the hiring of a technology coordinator, weekly assigned lab times for all classes, and the purchase of new software. The administration and Board developed a line item in the budget that allows for the purchase of computers and software. It is \$2500 annually.

Budget reports reflecting the actual parish contribution to the operating costs of *(Name of School)* were developed by the administration and Board. The parish bookkeeper provides a more realistic report on the actual cost of maintenance and capital improvements every quarter. At re-registration, parents are given a breakdown of the actual subsidy that the parish provides to the school.

The staff and administration at *(Name of School)* have accomplished the goals set forth since the last Self-Study. They have initiated procedures for annual review and follow-up. These accomplishments have made a very positive impact on student learning at *(Name of School)*.

Chapter III Self-Study Process

The community of (*Name of School*) is commended for undertaking this self-study process. The school community had a limited amount of time to complete such an extensive process. Their willingness and energy resulted in a process that modeled collaboration and cooperation.

The evidence observed shows that the development of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations was a collaborative effort among the administration, faculty, staff, students and parents.

A. (*Name of School*) Schoolwide Learning Expectations

A Catholic Learner/Leader who:

- Fosters Christian values of compassion, justice, and respect for the dignity of life.
- Has the ability to make good moral choices.
- Continues to live the gospel values on a daily basis and practices forgiveness.
- Knows and follows the teachings of the Catholic Church and attends Mass regularly.
- Is like leaven in his/her/parish and community.
- Participates in living his/her faith within his/her community.
- Discovers God's love through loving others.

A Responsible Citizen who:

- Takes full responsibility for his/her own actions and the consequences that might occur.
- Knows the difference between right and wrong using Christ as an example.
- Actively prays and works for the coming of God's Kingdom of peace, justice and love.
- Supports responsible Catholic/Christian leaders in the service of the poor and needy sharing personal resources.
- Thinks globally accepting responsibility toward future generations by caring for the earth and its creatures.
- Appreciates democracy and knows how to get involved within the community.
- Shares in building a faith community.

An Effective Communicator who:

- Is able to read, write and articulate ideas in an effective manner both with peers and adults.
- Speaks publicly with confidence.
- Can listen actively and critically with compassion.

A Life-long Learner who:

- Has a thirst for knowledge.
- Realizes that education is a never-ending process.
- Has a willingness to share knowledge with others.
- Is open to truth and constantly seeking ways to improve themselves and their community.
- Is willing to explore possibilities for improving global awareness.
- Reads to learn.
- Possesses self-direction and utilizes study skills effectively.

An Active Community Member who:

- Shares his/her gifts in service to others.

- Understands and participates in the makings of a community.
- Participates and volunteers in community service.
- Willingly takes an active roll in community affairs for the good of fellow citizens, community members and neighbors.
- Develops a solid sense of self-esteem and self-discipline that is reflected in social behavior.
- Is able to work cooperatively and actively brings a sense of compassion, tolerance, respect and justice into community groups.
- Seeks to solve family and community problems by peaceful and just means.

A Problem Solver who:

- Analyzes a situation and can organize materials effectively.
- Can make responsible decisions and evaluate its effectiveness.
- Has well-developed listening skills.
- Has the ability to search out answers to various problems.
- Is able to assess a situation and work toward a just solution for those involved.
- Is able to adapt and courageous enough to change his/her way of thinking.

A Globally Aware Citizen who:

- Understands modern technology.
- Realizes that decisions can affect many.
- Is aware that all is a gift from a loving Creator and thus to be treated with respect and care ultimately given back to the One who gave it.
- Respects and treats with care the gifts of a loving Creator.
- Is dedicated to peace and justice for the world community.
- Participates and understands the importance of recycling.
- Participates in discussions about world events.
- Appreciates and respects the cultural diversity of society.
- Is cognizant of current events and world affairs and the effect they have on all of us.

B. Process Used to Determine Schoolwide Learning Expectations

The Schoolwide Learning Expectations are visible throughout the school: in the classrooms, teachers' plan books, Parent/Student Handbook, student created charts in the classrooms, framed in the classrooms and other learning environments. *(Name of School)* has developed clear, comprehensive Schoolwide Learning Expectations, which were developed through the collaborative efforts of teachers and students with clear communication home to the parents. The students in many grades have re-written the Schoolwide Learning Expectations in their own words to make achievement and understanding of the SLE's achievable for all. The five key outcomes of the Self-Study were accomplished in varying degrees in the completion of this self-study.

1. The involvement and collaboration of school/community members in the self- study.

Although there was limited physical evidence of the collaboration of *(Name of School)* community, specific investigation on behalf of the team yielded information regarding their efforts. The principal and faculty worked in small groups assigned to different areas of the criterion. Once the small group completed their work, large group discussion was conducted to come to consensus for each narrative. The School Board was given the report to read and understand. The parents are very aware of the hard work, time and commitment the staff has put into this process. Their input came in the development of the five-year plan. Parents were asked for input on surveys.

Sharing with the parents, students and community, aspects of the Visiting Committee Report will provide positive recognition for their outstanding support of the school and an important tool to support the school's action plans. A strong sense of community among the principal, faculty and staff has developed from their collaborative efforts in this process.

2. The clarification of the school's mission, philosophy and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

All constituents of *(Name of School)* had input in the Mission and Philosophy of the school. Through their efforts and discussions a clear Philosophy and Mission statement that reflects a commitment to Catholic identity was developed. The Schoolwide Learning Expectations are a direct outcome of the Mission and Philosophy. The staff worked cooperatively to brainstorm and develop the Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Once these were formatted, they were distributed to Student Council and the School Board for input. Input was given and the Schoolwide Learning Expectations were approved. Students in various grades have had the opportunity to re-write these Schoolwide Learning Expectations in their own words providing them with a clearer understanding of what is expected of them.

Implementation of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations is in the beginning stages. Faculty members reflect these expectations in their plan books and unit lessons. Charts, posters and pictorial student displays can be found in many of the classrooms. There is a need to expand the implementation of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations to ensure that they are understood by all members of *(Name of School)* community. In addition, there is the need to develop a plan to assess student achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

3. The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning and spiritual development with respect to the criteria and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Schoolwide and grade-appropriate assessment tools were used by the principal and faculty to assess the program at *(Name of School)*. The principal and faculty consistently use the Brigance Assessment Program to assess individual student achievement of basic skills. A portfolio system to track student growth has been initiated. Teachers use other forms of assessment in the classroom such as tests, quizzes, projects, oral/written reports, and observation of student activities. These assessments provide the information needed to help individual students master basic grade level skills.

The total school community is committed to the spiritual development of the students. This is evident through the many activities provided for student leadership and spiritual development such as Religion Club, participation in liturgy and prayer service preparations, Choir Members, Ushers, Altar Servers, Lectors and morning prayer assembly.

Additional in-service in authentic assessment tools and techniques, plans to assess the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, and expanded use of the new portfolio program will foster a clearer understanding for staff of student learning and achievement of grade-level expectations.

4. The development of a school improvement action plan that addresses identified growth needs.

(Name of School) has developed an Action Plan that reflects their most critical areas. These Action Plans demonstrate the commitment of the principal, faculty, staff, School Board, Parent Club, and students to school improvement. This is extremely evident with the first goal area regarding Marketing and Recruitment. Much of this goal area has already been accomplished with good results. Expansion of this goal will lead to achievement of their goals in the area of Marketing and Recruitment. There is a strong need for the principal, faculty and staff to re-assess their Action Plans after this final report is given, expand on the action

plan items already accomplished, and to develop a goal for the fourth critical issue regarding assessment of Schoolwide Learning Expectations and student achievement of Grade Level Expectations.

5. The development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the school improvement plan.

Since this is *(Name of School)* first attempt at the new *Process for School Improvement*, it is the hope of the Visiting Committee that the obvious collaboration and diligent efforts demonstrated by the principal, faculty, and staff will be expanded to include all constituents of the school community to aid in the completion and implementation of the school Action Plans. The over-all plan presents various timelines for accomplishment. Re-assessment of the timelines and strategies within the Action Plans, in light of the Visiting Committee Report, will greatly assist in the successful implementation of strategies and clear assessment of the impact these strategies have had on overall student learning.

The team has observed through formal and informal discussion and observation of the school's actual program that the principal, faculty, staff, School Board, Parent Club, and students are truly committed to the target goals set forth in their report. In addition, there is evidence to prove that they are open to expansion of these target goals to better enhance the quality Catholic education they already provide for the students.

Chapter IV

A. Organization for Student Learning

A1. Philosophy and Mission

To what extent has the school established a clear statement of philosophy and mission that reflects a commitment to Catholic identity, thoroughness of instruction, a focus on the needs of the whole person, parents as primary educators, teachers as facilitators of learning, and recognition of the dignity of all members of the school community

(Name of School) has developed a clear Philosophy and Mission Statement that reflects a commitment to Catholic identity. The school environment focuses on a Christ-centered atmosphere and the importance of living a Christ-centered life. This is evident in the mutual respect shown among students and staff. Annual review of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations will ensure a renewed thrust of the school's philosophy and mission on a regular basis.

The faculty works in partnership with the parents to educate the "whole" child and to address their individual needs. Extra assistance and modifications for students with learning differences are implemented as necessary. There is a strong teacher-parent connection and parent volunteerism that support parents as primary educators and teachers as facilitators of learning. Many methods of communication are in place such as the weekly envelope, weekly progress reports at all grade levels; and notes to parents are examples of this strong connection.

Each child is viewed as an individual and every effort is made to help each child achieve his/her highest potential. The family atmosphere among administration, faculty, staff, students and parents is a very special element at *(Name of School)*.

A2. Governance

To what extent does the school administration (pastor and principal) seek input/participation from members of the school community, adopt policies which are consistent with the school philosophy and mission, delegate implementation to the professional staff, monitor results, and commit to sharing the Catholic vision?

The administrative responsibility rests with the pastor and principal of *(Name of School)* in alignment with the Diocesan vision. The pastor is highly visible, supportive and committed to the continued success of *(Name of School)* as a viable presence in the community.

The administration continually seeks input and participation from members of the school community via the School Board, which is comprised of parents, community members, and the Parent Club president. Both pastor and principal employ open door policies to discuss and address needs of students, parents and staff. Faculty and staff meetings are held regularly. Agenda items include delegation of responsibility for extra curricular activities and programs, opportunities for input on policies and programs and curricular discussions. These collaborative efforts result in policies that support and are consistent with the *(Name of School)* Mission, Philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

The *(Name of School)* Parent Club plays an extraordinary role in the annual fundraising efforts for the school. The large amount of funds raised is unique to the area and plays an important role in the stability of *(Name of School)*.

Two faculty members head the spirituality team for the faculty and students. They plan annual spiritual events such as liturgical seasonal celebrations, daily staff prayer, and provide prayers for all staff meetings. The faculty gathers

each day for morning prayer, and this is one example of the strong community of faith that the staff models to the school community. Faculty members lead students in annual service projects. All teachers of religion are required to be Catholic and hold, or be in the process of obtaining, a California Basic Catechist Certificate from the diocese.

(Name of School) follows the diocesan guidelines in the hiring of professionally qualified faculty and staff. Applicants are required to have earned a Bachelor's degree and possess, or be in the process of obtaining, a valid California Teaching Credential. The school acknowledges the need that all teachers must be adequately credentialed and has identified this as a growth need. New teachers are given a mentor to assist them in their first year at *(Name of School)*. A system of professional evaluation is utilized as a tool for fostering the professional growth of both administration and faculty. Through the efforts of the principal, professional and faith development opportunities that reflect the needs of the current staff are offered to the faculty throughout the year. Support staff's actions and collaborative involvement evidence their dedication to the mission, philosophy, Schoolwide Learning Expectations and successes of *(Name of School)*. The Catholic vision is shared throughout the entire school community.

A3. School Leadership

To what extent does the school leadership encourage the cultivation of Catholic values and spiritual formation of the school community, focus the energies of the school on achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, empower the staff and ensure shared accountability for student learning?

(Name of School)'s leadership encourages the cultivation of Catholic values and the spiritual formation of the school community. The leadership accomplishes this through the development of many activities that revolve around a Christ-centered, family environment. The relationship the principal has with the staff nurtures this family atmosphere.

Schoolwide Learning Expectations were developed and translated by students in various grades so that students themselves can understand why and what they are learning. Schoolwide Learning Expectations have been incorporated into the school's philosophy statement. *(Name of School)* emphasis on school environment promotes a society rooted in love, service, peace, and justice.

Extra-curricular activities are in place and the principal and faculty share these responsibilities to maintain their success. The principal, faculty and staff are also involved in fund-raising activities and service projects.

Consistent staff and parent communication is apparent through various sources to ensure shared accountability for student learning.

A4. Staff

To what extent are the school administration and staff professionally qualified, dedicated to the school's philosophy and mission, committed to ongoing spiritual and professional development that will promote student learning, prepared to lead by example and work collaboratively to create a community of faith?

(Name of School) staff and administration are professionally qualified, dedicated to the school's philosophy, mission, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations. They are committed to ongoing spiritual and professional development that will promote student learning. In addition, the principal, faculty and staff are prepared to lead by example.

A5. School Environment

To what extent does the school create and nurture a safe and healthy environment, which fosters community and achievement of religious and educational goals, and is characterized by trust, professionalism, realistic expectations for each student and a respect for diversity?

(Name of School) provides a safe and healthy environment that supports the mission, philosophy and Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Paid and volunteer supervisors ensure safety and plant security for all students. Each classroom has a special emergency procedure binder. All emergency drills and procedures are practiced as evidenced through the emergency binder and principal's calendars.

The installation of a new chain link fence on a formerly open side of the campus provides additional protection for students and staff.

Schoolwide daily morning prayer assembly, weekly birthday blessings, participation in the *(Name of School)* Fiesta celebration, local food drives, caroling to shut-ins, and get well cards to parishioners and others fosters a strong family community atmosphere achieving the religious and education goals of the school. Students are altar servers, choir members, and lectors at Masses. Various classes plan and participate in a weekly school Mass, Lenten Stations of the Cross, prayer services and regular Rosary services.

The faculty and staff model a genuine concern and respect for each other and each student. They are always willing to help each other and work as a support system to help their students learn through example. Students expressed that the faculty is available to them beyond school hours and school days. Professionalism is demonstrated throughout the school by the honest and open communication between administration, faculty, staff, parents, and students. Respect is visible in the relationship among the principal, faculty, staff, and the students through nurturing with verbal and written praise.

Realistic expectations for individual students are developed by using the assessment results of SAT and the Brigance Basic Skills Assessment, as well as running records, observations, discussion, teacher and text generated tests, and parent conferences.

To celebrate the diversity of the students, *(Name of School)* participates in a variety of ethnic celebrations such as the *(Name of School)* Fiesta, Mardi Gras, St. Patrick's Day, Valentine's Day, and St. Valbourgh's Day.

There is an assertive discipline plan in place that reflects the mission, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations of the school.

A6. Reporting Student Progress

To what extent does the administration and staff regularly review and report to the school community progress toward accomplishing the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

The administration and staff at *(Name of School)* annually review and report to the school community progress toward accomplishing the Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Teachers use SAT, Brigance Assessment, running records, book tests, teacher-generated assessment and tests, the ACRE survey, written work, discussion, observation, cooperative learning, presentations and reports, and reciprocal teaching to measure the achievement of the students.

Progress and accomplishments are communicated through notes, personal phone calls, weekly progress reports, quarterly progress reports, report cards, and annual parent-teacher conferences. Additional conferences are arranged if needed.

Daily school prayer assemblies, weekly parent letters, school newspaper, monthly newsletter in the parish bulletin and local newspaper coverage keep the parish and local communities abreast of *(Name of School)* programs and activities that promote student achievement.

The staff collaborated in the development of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations and utilize them in designing and choosing curriculum, making school improvements, planning assemblies, lesson planning, and setting up class and schoolwide activities.

A7. School Improvement Process

To what extent does the school administration facilitate school improvements as a process which is driven by a plan of action that embodies faith formation and quality instruction for all students, has school community commitment and involvement, and effectively guides the work of the school; and does the administration and instructional staff in cooperation with the school community demonstrate accountability through the monitoring of the implementation of the school learning expectations?

In this section of the Self-Study, *(Name of School)* staff listed the areas of strength and growth for student learning. However, in the Resource and Development of the Self-Study there is a detailed five-year plan. This plan defines the areas of curriculum, plant, recruitment and public relations, financial, alumni, and blue ribbon. Each area then lists goals to accomplish and a projected completion date. Interviews with the administration and School Board demonstrate a commitment to this five-year plan. The School Board sets the goals, with the administration and School Board annually updating this five-year plan. This plan facilitates school improvement and demonstrates accountability for monitoring its implementation.

Areas of Strength in Organization for Student Learning

- Strong teacher-parent connection and parent volunteerism that supports parents as primary educators and teachers as facilitators of learning.
- Family atmosphere among students, staff and parents is a very special element at *(Name of School)*.
- *(Name of School)* has a very unified and dedicated staff that is respected and appreciated by students and parents.
- Overall, the school environment is characterized as Christ-centered, family driven, and safe.
- Consistent and frequent communication among administration, faculty, and parents is employed.
- Parents are extremely active as volunteers and in the Parent Club fundraising activities.
- Participation in many Catholic and ethnic traditions and celebrations enhance the students' learning.
- The Catholic vision is shared throughout the entire school community.
- Each child is viewed as an individual and every effort is made so that each child is achieving his/her highest potential is a priority.
- Pastor is highly visible, supportive and committed to the continued success of *(Name of School)* as a viable presence in the community
- The relationship the principal has with the staff nurtures the family atmosphere evident at *(Name of School)*.

Areas of Growth in Organization for Student Learning

- In-service in curricular areas to include curriculum development and authentic tools to support critical issues in the current action plans
- Teachers continue to work toward valid California teaching credentials
- Annual review and assessment of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations with faculty, staff, parents, and students

Chapter IV

B. Curriculum and Instruction

B1. What Students Learn

To what extent does the school provide a challenging, comprehensive, and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's mission and philosophy, strengthens Catholic identity, and results in achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

(Name of School) provides a broad and relevant curriculum that is based on its philosophy, mission, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations. The curriculum is reviewed on a regular basis by the faculty to ensure that it is meeting the needs of *(Name of School)* students. Textbooks and materials are reviewed frequently and money is allocated into a fund each year for the purchase of new books and supplemental materials. Teachers are kept informed of professional growth opportunities.

The Schoolwide Learning Expectations were developed by the administration and faculty of the school and were presented to the students and parents. They are reviewed annually. Based on these expectations, students will be Catholic Learners, Catholic Leaders, Responsible Citizens, Effective Communicators, Life-long Learners, Active Community Members, Problem Solvers, and Globally Aware Citizens.

A variety of teaching methodologies and engaging activities are employed to provide a curriculum that meets the Schoolwide Learning Expectations and the students they serve. A new computer lab has been established with the goal of meeting the future technology needs of the students. Expanding both the computer and science labs will further this growth.

Religious values permeate the curriculum. Prayer is an integral part of the school day and emphasis is placed on service to the community. Students are given many opportunities to actively learn about, practice, and experience the Catholic faith.

It is evident that the foundation is in place for the principal and faculty to begin work on their Action Plan to develop a cohesive and spiraling curriculum that will reflect their mission, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations, state and diocesan standards, and local scope and sequence/grade level expectations.

Religion

(Name of School) reflects a strong Catholic identity and a community of faith evidenced by integration of Christ-centered values throughout the curriculum and daily school life. Grade levels, in turn celebrate a weekly Wednesday Mass and a monthly Sunday Mass. The students participate in all parts of the liturgy, including altar servers and choir. A school newsletter is inserted into the Parish Bulletin each month. Parents are expected to be the primary teachers and role models. Parents are also required to participate in the sacramental preparation of their children. Students participate in seasonal liturgical events, scripture readings, Stations of the Cross, recitation of the Rosary, Advent and Lenten activities through drama, role-playing, prayer, and song.

The school has a continuum of religion concepts. The scope and sequence begins with creation, Old and New Testament, doctrine, family values, and social justice focusing on global awareness. The Junior High curriculum provides a more in-depth focus on morality and social justice. Participation in the Religion Club offers the opportunity for students to actively live their faith through service projects and seasonal activities. Lenten service project funds are sent to the Children's Crisis Center. Students pray daily for the intentions of the parish memorial list. The faculty Spirituality Team leads the school through seasonal liturgical activities. Students are exposed to the service of missionaries through the use of the Columban Fathers Come and See Program. Students apply Catholic values and

religious knowledge across the disciplines by attitude and behavior. (*Name of School*) students express their faith through music, art, writing and prayer.

The faculty and staff gather daily for prayer before the beginning of the school day. Faculty members are required to attend in-service workshops and receive catechetical training. Each year several faculty members attend the Catholic Religious Education Congress in Los Angeles.

B2. How Students Learn

To what extent does the professional staff use research-based knowledge about teaching and learning, design and implement a variety of learning formational experiences which actively engage students and are consistent with the school's philosophy, mission and learning expectations?

The faculty and staff of (*Name of School*) are dedicated facilitators of student learning and spiritual growth. The faculty seeks new learning strategies to build a positive learning environment and enhance student success. Lessons take into consideration the diverse needs and learning styles of students. Teachers use a variety of methods and experiences in the classrooms to actively engage students. These methods include: lecture, discussion, debate, role playing, note taking, simulations, cooperative learning groups, hands-on activities, games, experiments, video instruction, and teacher modeling. Teachers are available to students before, during, and after school to provide students with needed assistance.

Teachers facilitate the spiritual growth of students by integrating the curriculum with the teachings of Christ. Students are encouraged to strive for excellence and are empowered to accept the challenge of living a Christ-centered life. Teachers act as role models through Christian behavior and participation in Mass and other religious functions.

Instruction is designed in accordance with the school's philosophy to educate and support the whole person within a Christ-centered atmosphere, to strive to work in partnership with the family to develop each child's God-given potential, and to integrate the curriculum with the teachings of Christ. There is evidence that students are familiar with the Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Religion

The administration, faculty, and staff are committed to provide an environment, which encourages students to develop spiritually, intellectually, sociologically, and physiologically. Instruction focuses on the formation of Catholic values with the respect to the freedom and dignity of each child.

Various teaching strategies are used to facilitate student learning of the Catholic faith. These strategies include lectures, discussion, story telling, role-playing, auditory aids, visual aids, and letter writing. The students model the Catholic faith through their active participation in various forms of prayer, parish and school liturgies, the sacraments, and service projects. Students are given the opportunity to be involved in the learning process through many instructional activities in the classrooms and extra-curricular activities such as the Religion Club. Supplemental materials are used to enhance the curriculum and religious learning experiences.

B3. How Assessment is Used

To what extent is teacher and student use of assessment frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process? Are the assessment results the basis for measurement of progress toward the Schoolwide Learning expectations, regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction, and allocation of resources?

Teachers at *(Name of School)* use assessment to confirm that curriculum objectives are covered, learning expectations are addressed, and student learning is enhanced by instruction. A wide variety of tools are used to measure learning including standardized test scores, running records, written tests and quizzes, written and oral reports, experiments, journals and observation. Assessments are completed on an annual, quarterly, monthly, weekly and daily basis.

Student assessment is used as a determinant for curriculum planning. Teachers modify their instruction based on assessment results so that the various learning styles of students are addressed. Parents are informed of their child's performance through various reporting methods. As a cohesive and spiraling curriculum is developed, a more formalized plan for student assessment is needed to accurately evaluate student achievement of Schoolwide Learning Expectations and Subject Area Grade Level Expectations.

Based on the assessment data, funds are allocated to support and obtain textbooks, library and resource books, instructional videos, science lab supplies, and professional growth opportunities for teachers.

Religion

A variety of assessment methods and activities is used to measure and evaluate student learning. Students are assessed through textbook tests, teacher created tests, assignments, reports, oral quizzes, projects, discussions, special projects, and observation. The ACRE Religion Survey is administered in the 5th and 8th grade classes. Results are used to address specific areas of learning that need to be reinforced. Following evaluations, teachers determine if learning expectations were met and if instruction needs to be modified.

Students are actively involved in the review of their progress on a regular basis. Through assessment, students are given the opportunity to reflect on their role as Catholics in today's society. This addresses the need for students to become Catholic learners and leaders.

The assessments utilized are in keeping with the philosophy and mission of *(Name of School)*. All materials emphasize the teachings of Christ. Assessment of student knowledge influences the textbooks and resources for which the school needs to allocate funds.

Faith Experience

To what extent does the school community place high priority on frequent prayer and liturgical experiences which are developmentally and liturgically appropriate and meaningful? To what extent are spiritual formation and support of the religious mission of the school a priority?

Frequent prayer and liturgical activities as part of student life is evident throughout the school program including daily prayer, formal prayers learned at each grade level, weekly Mass, assembly prayer and scripture reading, classroom prayer, special liturgies related to the Church calendar, retreats, Christmas pageants, teacher-led meditation and contemplation time, and other age appropriate activities.

Students serve in the parish as altar servers, lectors, choir members, musicians, and participate in outreach in support of local charities and worldwide mission organizations. Students participate in many cultural, religious celebrations reflecting their ethnicity and commitment to their faith.

The church's seasonal liturgical celebrations are visible throughout the school in activities and classrooms displays, Stations of the Cross, mite boxes and Lenten mini-retreat.

Parents are active participants in the sacramental preparation programs and in the "Parents in Prayer" group. Parents facilitate small groups on junior high retreats, and they coordinate outreach ministries for junior high students.

The pastor celebrates weekly Eucharist and retreat Masses with students. The school principal leads prayer at appropriate occasions and participates in all religious events at the school. In addition, he moderates the school Religion Club which plans faith activities for the school community.

Areas of Strength in Curriculum and Instruction

- The curriculum of (Name of School) is rooted in its philosophy and mission statement.
- A great emphasis on individual tutoring and assessment of basic skills provide for the diverse learning styles of students.
- The faculty and staff strive to ensure that students are provided with updated textbooks, current materials and teaching methods.
- A strong Catholic identity and a community of faith is evidenced by the integration of Christ-centered values throughout the curriculum and daily school life.
- *(Name of School)* has a solid religion curriculum with clearly-developed grade level expectations and student-centered activities that promote student achievement of these grade level expectations.

Areas for Growth in Curriculum and Instruction

- Formalize a cohesive and spiraling curriculum that reflects *(Name of School)*'s Schoolwide Learning Expectations that is in alignment with state standards, diocesan guidelines and local grade level scope and sequences and expectations.
- Develop an assessment plan for this cohesive and spiraling curriculum that addresses portfolio assessment, authentic assessment and evaluates student achievement of Schoolwide Learning Expectations and grade level expectations.
- Expand the use of the new computer and science labs.

Chapter IV

C. Support for Student Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

C1. Student Connectedness

Within the school's community of faith, to what extent are students connected to a system of support services, activities, and opportunities to assist them in meeting the challenges of the curricular/co-curricular program in order to achieve the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

(Name of School) offers a variety of activities to support student involvement and promote spiritual growth, Christian leadership and service. Students participate in many programs connected to the Church and local communities. During the annual celebration of Fiesta, students and parents participate in novena Masses, choirs, Rosaries, processions, and cultural interactions. Students also actively participate in weekly Mass serving as lectors, choir members, gift bearers, and altar servers. Religious retreats are offered in grades 6-8th. All students participate in weekly Rosaries, daily morning prayer assemblies, extended prayer in the classroom, and liturgical season events. Students at *(Name of School)* are also given the opportunity to share their gifts and talents with the Church and local communities through many Christian service projects. The school acknowledges that, with the absence of a nearby Catholic high school, there is a transition issue between the 8th and 9th grade for students.

(Name of School) students are given the opportunity to participate in curricular and extra curricular activities that challenge them both inside and outside of the classroom. Some activities include the Bank of America Speech Contest, spelling and geography bees, student government, student clubs, and athletic programs. The Student Council is very active in planning social events and service projects for the school and local communities. Student Council allows students to have leadership roles and develop decision-making skills.

Students are provided with various support services. Teachers provide tutoring during lunch periods and after school. Reading Recovery, extended day child care, vision and hearing screening, as well as benefits from government funded programs through Titles I, II and IV are also offered. Students are referred to outside support services when needs cannot be met on site.

C2. Parent/Community Involvement

To what extent does the school administration employ a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's support system to students?

(Name of School) recognizes parents as partners in the moral, spiritual, and academic development of their children. Parents are the primary teachers of all the students. Parents who were interviewed expressed their enthusiasm and support of their school and felt that their children are receiving a strong Catholic and academic education. The parents at *(Name of School)* demonstrate a strong commitment to ensure that current school programs are maintained and future programs can be implemented. Parents are very active in the life of the school by volunteering their time and talents to the school community.

Parents and other community members are actively involved in various school support systems. The *(Name of School)* Advisory Board of Catholic Education assists the pastor and the principal in establishing educational goals, priorities, and policies for the school. The Board has formed committees to support the five-year plan. The *(Name of School)* Parent Club promotes a broader appreciation of the mission, goals, and ideals of the school. The Parent Club provides a solid resource to plan, coordinate, and staff the school's fund raising efforts and social functions.

Parents volunteer to provide many services to the school such as serving hot lunches, assisting with classroom activities, chaperoning field trips, coaching athletic programs, and providing transportation. Parents are also involved

through the open communication that exists between home and school in the form of progress reports, quarterly report cards, newsletters, conferences, and parent nights. The school has also established business partnerships with local merchants to aid with lunch programs and fund-raising efforts.

Areas of Strength in Support for Student Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

- The pastor, principal, faculty, staff, and parents are committed to providing a strong Catholic education with experiences to develop personal, spiritual, and academic growth.
- The parish and the local community strongly support school activities and fundraisers. Support services offer students many opportunities to develop Christian values, self-worth, and leadership skills.
- The school provides a wide variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities in which all students can participate.
- The students at (Name of School) demonstrate pride, respect, and ownership in their school and education.
- Parents are recognized as primary educators of the students and are actively involved in the school community to support that role.

Areas For Growth

- Establish a program with the support of alumni to help students assimilate into the local public high school.

Chapter IV

D. Resource Management and Development

D1. Resources

To what extent are the resources available to the school sufficient to sustain the school program, reflect financial practices and responsible stewardship, and effectively used to carry out the school mission, philosophy and Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

(Name of School) practices sound financial accounting and responsible stewardship that reflects commitment to the school's philosophy, mission and Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Every aspect of the Philosophy and Schoolwide Learning Expectations is considered, as well as diocesan vision and directives, before financial decisions are made. When preparing the budget, operating expenses, financial decisions, and fundraising plans are reviewed by the pastor, principal, School Board, staff and parents to ensure that the needs of students are being met. Each month a budget analysis is given to the diocese to report on the current financial status of *(Name of School)*.

(Name of School) effectively utilizes outside resources such as grants and fund-raisers, Title funds and partnerships with local businesses provide additional funds to support student services. Recent improvement projects completed with the use of funds from these sources include: a renovated playground, new computer lab, new science lab, remodeling of the teachers' lounge, new windows for all classrooms, sinks in the classrooms, lunch tables, new desks, fencing, resurfacing of blacktop, a new maintenance building, painting, and a phone system for communication between the offices and classrooms. Annual fundraisers support the acquisition of library and resource materials and sports equipment.

D2. Resource Planning

To what extent does the administration execute responsible planning for the future?

A five-year plan committee composed of the principal, a teacher, and three School Board members met and formulated a plan to address the future needs of *(Name of School)*. This plan includes the budgeting of money for plant improvements, further development of an alumni program, and enhancing public relations and recruitment. The school board reviews the plan annually and sets goals addressing the plan. This plan needs to be expanded to include funds for acquisition of supplementary materials as well as staff development. In addition, because of the changing needs of the community, the school needs to evaluate expanding the new marketing/recruitment program.

In addition to the five-year plan, the School Board has developed an action plan to market/recruit new students to *(Name of School)*; this plan will address the changing needs of the community.

Areas of Strength in Resource Management and Development

- *(Name of School)* is very successful at pursuing and implementing outside funding opportunities in the form of grants and fund-raisers and effectively uses these sources to sustain and enhance the school program.
- The establishment of the *(Name of School)* Catholic School Foundation provides a vision for long-term financial stability of the school.
- Parents, the parish, and local businesses strongly support the schools' financial growth and provide opportunities to generate funds.
- *(Name of School)* has effectively managed funds to make major plant, curricular and support service developments.

Areas for Growth in Resource Management and Development

- Implement and expand the new marketing/recruitment program to meet the changing needs of the community.
- Expand the five-year plan to include acquisition of supplemental materials to enhance the curriculum.
- Include allocation of funding for professional growth in-services to aid in curriculum development

Synthesis of Schoolwide Areas of Strength and Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up

General Comments

(Name of School) is commended for using *Process for School Improvement*. The Self-Study was completed in a timely manner. The pastor, principal, faculty, staff, students and parents are to be commended for their energy, dedication, hard work, and commitment to the development of a family environment at *(Name of School)*.

Schoolwide Learning Expectations were developed with a deep concern for the true needs of the students. Principal and faculty embrace them. The faculty incorporates the Schoolwide Learning Expectations into lessons and daily classroom life. Students have re-written them in their own words to help them understand what is expected of them. It would benefit the total school community to expand efforts of implementation of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

The *Process for School Improvement* is a vehicle for professional collaboration and communication among staff, which for *(Name of School)* has led to an understanding of the Areas of Strength and Areas for Growth. Although the narratives within the Self-Study reflect only the strengths of the school, the Visiting Committee was able to seek out evidence both written and verbal that support the Areas for Growth and the critical target goals that were addressed within the contents of the Self-Study. Completion of this process has opened new avenues for curricular growth and fostered leadership skills in many faculty members.

Clear goals/strategies have been written for three of the Critical Areas for Growth. The leadership of the school is committed to the development of an additional goal area that will reflect the final Critical Area of Growth regarding assessment of Schoolwide Learning Expectations and Subject Area Grade Level Expectations.

Evidence that supports areas of strength and critical areas for follow-up:

- The process for School Improvement Self-Study.
- The Progress Report of the previous WASC/WCEA recommendations.
- Evidence to support the Self-Study: student work, student portfolios, student projects, photographs, lesson plans, standardized test scores, communication tools, surveys, meeting agendas and minutes, handbooks, videos, historical scrap books.
- Classroom observations.
- Formal meetings with leadership team, pastor, principal, faculty, students, School Board and Parent Club.
- Informal interviews with leadership team members, pastor, principal, faculty, students, parents.
- General observations of school activities, procedures, interactions.

Schoolwide Areas of Strength:

- Strong teacher-parent connection and parent volunteerism that supports parents as primary educators and teachers as facilitators of learning.
- Family atmosphere among students, staff, and parents is a very special element at *(Name of School)*.
- A very unified and dedicated staff that is respected and appreciated by students and parents.
- Active parent involvement as volunteers and in the Parent Club fundraising activities.
- The Catholic vision is shared throughout the entire school community.
- A great emphasis on individual tutoring and assessment of basic skills provide for the diverse learning styles of students.

- A strong Catholic identity and a community of faith is evidenced by the integration of Christ-centered values throughout the curriculum and daily school life.
- The pastor, principal, faculty, staff and parents are committed to providing a strong Catholic education with experiences to develop personal, spiritual, and academic growth.
- The parish and the local community strongly support school activities and fundraisers.
- The students at (Name of School) demonstrate pride, respect, and ownership in their school and education.
- (Name of School) is very successful at pursuing and implementing outside funding opportunities in the form of grants and fund-raisers and effectively uses these sources to sustain and enhance the school program.

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Growth:

- Implement and expand the new marketing/recruitment program to meet the changing needs of the community.
- Formalize a cohesive and spiraling curriculum that reflects (Name of School)'s Schoolwide Learning Expectations that is in alignment with state standards, diocesan guidelines and local grade level scope and sequences and expectations.
- Develop an assessment plan for this cohesive and spiraling curriculum that addresses portfolio assessment, authentic assessment, and evaluates student achievement of Schoolwide Learning Expectations and Grade Level Expectations.
- Further enhancement of and emphasis on developing assessment methods to measure and report student progress in relation to the Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Chapter V Schoolwide Action Plan

The Visiting Committee affirms and acknowledges the three target goals set forth by the school in the Self-Study and the Action Plan. The Visiting Committee finds that the school community is well-aware of their needs and well-prepared to begin the implementation of the target goals within its Action Plans. The Visiting Committee finds that the honest and straight forward approach of the school throughout the Self-Study process led to these well defined and clearly supported target goals.

The target goals for *(Name of School)* are:

1. Implement and expand the current marketing plan and development program.
2. Develop an assessment plan to include in-service and implementation of a variety of assessment tools.
3. Formalize and implement a cohesive and spiraling curriculum that reflects the SLE's and that is in alignment with state and diocesan grade level standards.

Evidence to support these target goals include:

- Process for School Improvement Self-Study
- All evidence of student learning presented during the visit
- Classroom observations
- Meetings and interviews with all school constituents
- General observations of the school activities, meetings, etc.

The Visiting Committee is confident that the school is well prepared and committed to implementing the Action Plans. The Visiting Committee feels quite confident that the collaborative nature and honest approach used throughout the Self-Study process at the school will continue in the implementation of the goals and strategies of the Action Plan.

The school is requested to submit appropriate status reports on their Critical Areas for Growth as designated by the Diocesan Department of Catholic Schools.

Recommendation for Term Of Accreditation (Catholic Elementary Schools)

Please type or use word processor to facilitate copying and legibility.
(In the event of a formal appeal, this document will be provided to the school principal.)

Name of school visited: _____

Enrollment: _____ Grades to be accredited: K-8 Self-Study form: PSI

Address of school: _____

Name of school district/diocese: _____

Date of Visit: _____

	<u>A Term of Accreditation For Six Years:</u> A term of six years with an annual Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report submitted to the arch/diocese.
XXX	<u>A Term of Accreditation For Six Years With a Review:</u> A term of six years with an annual Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report submitted to the arch/diocese, and during the third year of the six year term a mid-term summary progress report on the schoolwide critical areas for follow-up submitted to the WCEA commission.
	<u>A Term of Accreditation For Three Years:</u> A term of three years with a Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report and a one-day revisit by a two member committee during the third year. (Annual Progress Report submitted to arch/diocese)
	<u>A Term of Accreditation For One Or Two Years:</u> A term of one or two years with a Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report and a one day revisit to serve as a "warning" that unless prompt attention is given to the schoolwide critical areas for follow-up, and serious attention to the total report, accreditation may be denied. (Annual progress monitored by arch/diocese)
	<u>Denial of Accreditation:</u> Denial of accreditation based on conditions detailed in the Visiting Committee Report.

Signatures

Committee Member	Committee Member (WASC Representative)
Committee Member	Committee Member (WASC Representative)
Committee Member	Committee Member (WASC Representative)
Committee Member	Committee Member (WASC Representative)

771Committee CHAIRPERSON	Date	Office Phone #	Home Phone #
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The Justification Statement and Recommendation for a Term of Certification/Accreditation

This is a confidential report. Unless the Visiting Committee Report is contested by the school, the contents of the justification statement are known only to the Visiting Committee, the Arch/Diocesan Superintendent, the WCEA Commissioners, and the WASC Commission.

The justification statement closely follows the WASC/WCEA criteria and purposes for school evaluation. Committee members are asked to indicate the degree to which the school fulfills the criteria and supporting areas of strength and supporting critical areas for follow-up that support their decisions.

The rationale for the term of certification/accreditation depends upon the degree to which the criteria are fulfilled in the Visiting Committee Report, and the consensus of the Visiting Committee.

The justification statement must be signed by each member of the Visiting Committee before departure. The Chairperson sends the original copy to the Arch/Diocesan Commissioner.

Documentation and Justification Statement

For proper processing, please complete the information in the box:

Chair Name	Name and City of School Visited
Chair's Work Phone	Chair's Home Phone
	Alternate Number
E-Mail Address (if applicable)	

On the following pages, circle the rating that best fits the results of the self-study and the visit that was selected through Visiting Committee dialogue and consensus.

- Highly Effective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence of (1) the achievement of a high degree of student learning with respect to the category of criteria and (2) a strong operable school improvement process not requiring external monitoring.
- Effective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence of (1) the achievement of student learning with respect to the category of criteria; and (2) the need for some minimal outside monitoring to support the school improvement process.
- Somewhat Effective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provided limited evidence of (1) the achievement of student learning with respect to the category of criteria and (2) the necessity for outside monitoring to support the school's improvement.
- Ineffective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provide little, if any, evidence of (1) the achievement of student learning with respect to the category of criteria and (2) the necessity for consistent outside monitoring to support the school's improvement process.

Also, on the following pages, provide a brief narrative that describes the degree to which the school supports student learning through each category of criteria.

An accreditation term will be based upon a school demonstrating the following:

XXX mark the rating chosen for each section

1. Involvement and collaboration of stakeholders in doing the Self-Study that accomplishes the key outcomes of the Self-Study.

Visiting Committee Rating	Highly Effective	Effective	xxx Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
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Narrative Rationale:

Based on the reading of *(Name of School)* Self-Study, observations, viewing of evidence, and conversations with administration, faculty, staff, and School Board, it was found that partial involvement of all stakeholders was present in the determination of schoolwide strengths and growth needs. Narratives in the Self-Study reflected only strengths of *(Name of School)*. The Visiting Team needed to clearly understand what the Criterion and Critical Areas of Growth were and from where they were derived. This was done through intense interviews and evaluation of physical evidence. There was also little physical or observed evidence of collaboration with the School Board, Parent Club, parent community, and students.

2. The defining of the school's purpose through Schoolwide Learning Expectation and academic standards.

Visiting Committee Rating	Highly Effective	xxx Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
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Narrative Rationale:

All constituents of *(Name of School)* had input in the Mission and Philosophy of the school. The Schoolwide Learning Expectations are a direct outcome of the school's Mission and Philosophy. Implementation of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations needs to be expanded to ensure they are understood and known by all members of the School Board, Parent Club, parent community and students.

3. The use of a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, and analyze student performance data.

Visiting Committee Rating	Highly Effective	xxx Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
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Narrative Rationale:

(Name of School) has grade appropriate assessment tools in place. Based on observations and reviewing the curriculum, it was found that increased in-service in authentic assessment tools, plans to assess the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, and expanded use and understanding of portfolio assessment is needed.

4. The acceptable progress by all students toward clearly defined Schoolwide Learning Expectation, academic standards, and other institutional and/or governing authority expectations.

Visiting Committee Rating	Highly Effective	xxx Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
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Narrative Rationale:

(Name of School) administration and faculty monitor the progress of all students and are aware of students for which stronger achievement is needed. Multiple measures, such as the Brigance Assessment, show student growth toward basic skills. However, there is a need for more alternative assessment tools and specific subject area assessment tools to more accurately assess student individual growth in each subject area. Implementation and internalization of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations will be a great benefit to student achievement and progress.

5. An Organization For Student Learning that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating	xxx Highly Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
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Narrative Rationale:

(Name of School) has developed a clear Philosophy and Mission that reflect a strong commitment to Catholic identity. The Catholic vision is shared throughout the entire school community. The school has a very unified and dedicated staff that is respected and appreciated by students and parents. There is a strong teacher-parent connection and active parent volunteers who support the parents as primary educators and the teachers as facilitators of learning. A supportive pastor and energetic principal nurture the family atmosphere that is evident at *(Name of School)*.

6. Curriculum and Instruction that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating	Highly Effective	Effective	xxx Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
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Narrative Rationale:

The broad curriculum of *(Name of School)* is rooted in its Philosophy and Mission. It is evident that students are working toward the mastery of simple basic skills. The development and implementation of a formalized, cohesive and spiraling curriculum that reflect state standards, diocesan guidelines and local expectations would result in student achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations and Subject Area Grade Level Expectations. A more comprehensive assessment plan would ensure the individual needs of all students are being addressed.

To support the cohesive curriculum, a more extensive effort needs to be made on behalf of the staff to assess the Schoolwide Learning Expectations in all areas of the school curriculum. Lesson development, student activities, true portfolio assessment, and parental knowledge of Schoolwide Learning Expectations will help achieve this very important part of *Process for School Improvement*.

7. Support for Student Personal, Spiritual, and Academic Growth that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating	Highly Effective	xxx Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
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Narrative Rationale:

The faith community that is evident at *(Name of School)* is supported by the pastor, principal, faculty, staff, and parents. They are committed to providing a strong Catholic education. The students demonstrate a sense of pride, respect, and ownership for *(Name of School)*. The School Board and Parent Club provide a solid resource to plan, coordinate, and staff the school's fund-raising efforts. The rapport between pastor, principal, and parents allows for this wonderful faith community to support the personal, spiritual, and academic needs of the students.

8. Resource Management and Development that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating	Highly Effective	xxx Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
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Narrative Rationale:

(Name of School) is very successful at pursuing and implementing outside funding opportunities. They have developed a five-year plan that accurately reflects the future needs of the school. Implementation of their Action Plan regarding marketing and recruitment has already begun. The school board consists of both school parents, parish members, and community leaders all dedicated to the overall growth of the school. The effect *(Name of School)* has on the overall community of *(Name of City)* was very evident to the team in our conversations with the School Board. They need to focus on the changing demographics of the community and the impact this will have on the future of the school.

9. The alignment of a long-range schoolwide action plan to the school's areas for critical growth to support high achievement of all students.

Visiting Committee Rating	Highly Effective	xxx Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
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Narrative Rationale:

(Name of School) has developed an Action Plan that reflects their most critical areas. There is a need for the principal, faculty, and staff to re-assess and expand this plan, particularly in the areas of curriculum and assessment. This requires the development of a fourth goal area regarding assessment of Schoolwide Learning Expectations and student achievement of grade level expectations.

10. The capacity to implement and monitor the schoolwide action plan.

Visiting Committee Rating	Highly Effective	xxx Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
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Narrative Rationale:

The apparent collaboration and diligent efforts demonstrated by the principal, faculty, and staff need to be expanded to include all constituents of the school community. Re-assessment of the time lines and strategies within the current Action Plans will ensure a timely completion of the Critical Areas For Growth. There is evidence to prove that all constituents of the school are committed to the growth set forth in the Visiting Committee Report and reflected in three of the school's action plan.

The Visiting Committee is convinced that the organizational structure is in place to accomplish the Action Plans the principal and faculty put forward. Inclusion of the parent boards would help facilitate the work of the principal and faculty.

11. The use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive school improvement.

Visiting Committee Rating	Highly Effective	xxx Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
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Narrative Rationale:

The prior accreditation left the school community with a great deal to accomplish, many of the recommendations repetitive in nature. Although there has been a steady turn over of staff and administration since the last report, the recommendations made were achieved and in some cases exceeded. The school community should be proud of its accomplishments over the past six years. It is evident to the team that the school staff is aware of the need to address the current academic concerns to ensure a higher level of student achievement

Provide a brief narrative, which summarizes the Visiting Committee's rationale for the recommended term. (If there is an unresolved minority opinion please indicate and explain.)

- Accreditation term option seriously considered
- Reasons for the term recommended

In the comments, reflect upon the following:

- The visiting committee's discussions and process (summarize as needed in the narrative)
- The degree to which students are learning
- The strength of the school in all areas of the program and the operation
- The capacity of the school to implement and monitor the action plan

The Visiting Committee had a detailed conversation regarding the terms of "6" vs. "6R". The key issues that lead us to the "6R" term are stated below.

The overall school strengths are its Catholic Identity, a dedicated, faith-centered pastor and principal, an energetic and committed staff, and a strong parental support and organizational structure. All are the components for an excellent Catholic school. The concerns of the Visiting Committee are as follows:

First, the concern regarding the collaboration with areas of growth of the Self-Study. The team had to do a great deal of research to assess how the school community determined their key issues and whether there was agreement in the community regarding these key and critical issues. Although the parent group and School Board are especially strong and committed, they were not included much at all in the process. They are a valuable asset and would greatly benefit in the accomplishment of the school action plans.

Next, the changing demographics of the (*Name of City*) community are still unclear to the school staff. As the demographics change, so do the students (*Name of School*) will serve. The school community needs to better prepare itself for these changes and to put a strong marketing tool in place to take advantage of what appears to the Visiting Committee as new growth for the area. This was clear to the team by seeing and reading about the new housing developments currently being built and planned for in (*Name of City*).

In addition there is a need for a stronger understanding of the importance of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, especially among the parents. The effort to create these was collaborative only among the staff and students; the parents were not involved. The students have a basic understanding as to what the Schoolwide Learning Expectations are and why they are important. There is such a need for the staff to spend time developing a more comprehensive plan to incorporate, integrate, and implement the Schoolwide Learning Expectations so that they will have a significant impact on student achievement in all areas of their school life.

The final component that lead us to the "6R" term was the need for a formalized, comprehensive, and spiraling curriculum and development of key assessment strategies to evaluate student achievement. The interview process the team conducted was very detailed with the leadership team of two, the staff, and the students. Key questions were asked of all constituents regarding curriculum issues. It became apparent to the Visiting Committee that although each teacher may be doing well within his/her own classroom, there is limited continuity between grade levels and with special programs. The Brigance Assessment test used is only for simple basic skills and does not assess student achievement of key curricular areas. The team viewed student work and evidenced repeat development of some key subject area expectations, especially in math. Student portfolios are based on the student's achievement on the Brigance. It was not clear to the team as we previewed the work that the faculty is aware of which students are achieving above grade level, below grade level or at grade level. The faculty was unclear about alternative assessment tools, portfolio being one of them.

For the three main reasons stated above and in alignment with the WASC/WCEA Process for School Improvement worksheet, we have come to consensus on a six-year term with a review.

**THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING COMMITTEE**

St. School
Street
City, State, Zip

(Arch)Diocese of

Prepared for
The Accrediting Commission for Elementary Schools

Submitted to
Western Catholic Educational Association
and
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

PROCESS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
(Date)

We, the Visiting Committee, extend our sincere thanks
to the members of
Saint (School) Community...
Clergy, Administration, Faculty, Staff,
Students and Parents.
Your gracious and generous hospitality
was greatly appreciated.

We wish you well in the implementation
of your Action Plan.

CHAPTER I THE STUDENT/COMMUNITY PROFILE

Summary Statements

This report was developed by the local profile committee based on surveys of the various constituencies and statistical data relative to the (Name of School) Community.

(Name of School) is a K-8 Catholic school that has served the central (city) area and the community of (name of parish) Church for 58 years. During this time the population of the school has changed from predominately Caucasian to Hispanic descent. The school has also experienced a decrease in enrollment, thus changing it to a mission school.

The enrollment continues to be primarily Catholic: 75% of the students come from (name of parish) with ethnic backgrounds including 90% Hispanic, 4% African-American, 2% Native American, and the remaining percent Caucasian. The majority of parents have a limited education and 5% have a college degree. Many of the parents work for the city and/or state government; others work in non-skilled positions. Many of the (Name of School) families come from low socio-economic status with about 49 of the 113 families headed by a single female parent. About 9% of the parents are not proficient in English.

The surveys recognized the welcoming and supportive staff of (Name of School). Predominantly Caucasian, a number of them have taught at the school for many years. This academic year there has been a transition with four new teachers, two of whom are missionary volunteers. Most teachers have their Catechist certification, as well as 40 hours postgraduate or a master's degree. Professional growth has been a priority as the teachers seek to enrich their teaching.

(Name of School) consists of 9 classrooms with a capacity of 315 students at 35 students per classroom. Presently the enrollment totals 166 students with classes averaging 15 students. The School Advisory Board has supported efforts to maintain an enrollment averaging 25 students per room.

Employing a pastoral administrator enabled (Name of School) to begin a preventative maintenance plan in 1999. There have been many capital improvements in the last three years due primarily to the diocesan assistance program. These include: rewiring the school; installing a new bell, fire alarm, and public address system; replacing all classroom doors and locks; re-roofing the building; installing air conditioning; redoing the electrical facilities in the kitchen. The computer lab continues to flourish and has been wired for Internet service, which is presently in use. New computers are replacing the outdated ones. A setback was experienced when the hall roof collapsed, leaving the kindergarten room unusable. Adjustments were made as the library became the kindergarten room and the meeting room became the library.

The School Advisory Board is comprised of eight members who work with the school in an advisory capacity. The *Parents-As-Partners* is active in providing activities for the children of (Name of School). The president and vice president are automatically members of the Advisory Board. The parish council is supportive of the school. Among these three groups, constant work is being done to make the school a better place to learn. The school families complete 30 hours of school service and the Society of Mary (city) also volunteers their service as library aides.

(Name of Parish) is unable financially to support the school. Wealthier parishes in the diocese have helped through an *Adopt-a-Student Program*, through donations, and paying the salary of one employee. Additional help has come from the diocese, a computer corporation, the local sports team reach-out program, United Way, and the Society of

School Community Profile, (Name of School)

Mary. The parish presently has a foundation director to seek out businesses and build a relationship with them for future funding/support.

The projections and trends for the (Name of School) community are that the minority population will continue to grow. The school continues to provide a safe environment for the students as they learn and grow in mind, body, and spirit. They are provided opportunities to develop to their highest potential and are encouraged to embrace their Catholic identity, become self-directed individuals, and live their faith with integrity and conviction in an ever-changing world.

School Community Profile, (Name of School)

CHAPTER II THE PROGRESS REPORT

The last WASC/WCEA Visit at (Name of School) occurred in 1995. At that time the Visiting Committee made three major recommendations.

The administration, faculty and staff of (Name of School) have reported addressing these major recommendations as follows:

1. ***That the administration and faculty develop a schoolwide discipline program that will provide an environment ensuring optimum learning and teach students self-discipline skills.***

The faculty adopted the *Discipline With Purpose* program. In March of 1996, the staff and parents were given a presentation of the program. In June of 1996, the principal and staff received in-depth training in *Discipline With Purpose*. When school began in August of 1996 and continuing until the following January, the staff began the use of the program. During the months of January to May, 1997, the staff evaluated the program at staff meetings each Friday afternoon. Additionally, the staff added the discipline cycle of the program. In August of 1997, full implementation of the program began. They continue to use the program and train/update teaching staff yearly.

2. ***That the administration and faculty expand the family life education component of the religion curriculum and initiate the NCEA AIDS curriculum in all grades in a timely manner.***

In June of 1996, the principal collected existing family life programs and a copy of the NCEA AIDS curriculum. The material was reviewed in August. Then the staff met with a consultant to discuss implementation procedures for a family life curriculum. In October of 1996, the School Advisory Board was given a report of a family life curriculum from the Catholic perspective. In January of 1997, the pastor met with the staff to discuss program implementation. In May of 1997, the faculty agreed to start a pilot program for family life in grades four, six, and seven. Seventh grade piloted the NCEA AIDS curriculum. During the summer of 1997, the principal obtained copies of two programs that the staff agreed upon. After successfully piloting the programs and discussing the pilots, the staff agreed to use Brown-ROA Company. The seven-lesson version of the program was selected. The pastor approved the program that the faculty selected. A parent meeting was scheduled to explain the curriculum and the reasons for instituting it. It was held in the fall of 1999. Company consultants met with the staff and in-serviced them on the program selected. During 1999-2000 school year, the program was fully implemented in grades K-8.

3. ***That the administration and board delineate the inter relatedness of the Alumni Association, Development Board, and School Enhancement Board to improve the communication and effectiveness of these groups.***

The boards were abolished in the 1995-1996 school year. The school board and parents organization took over the major responsibilities. The alumni association was nonfunctioning and was dropped the following school year.

Progress Report, (Name of School)

Since 1996, other recommendations (Name of School) indicates they have addressed are:

- an emphasis has been placed on the building of a Christian community among, students, teachers, and parents.
- school organizations were down-sized, restructured and in-serviced.
- *Discipline With Purpose* has been integrated into the curriculum for daily use in the classrooms.
- Catholic Charities has provided the school with a counselor for two days a week.
- diocesan curriculum guidelines have been used to provide a scope and sequence in most subject areas.
- teachers have been provided opportunities for in-service to enhance teaching/learning strategies.
- utilization of the diocesan religion guidelines assisted faculty in identifying areas of content needing further development.
- new textbooks were studied and adopted for English.
- teachers were trained in the Junior Great Books Program and some continue to implement the program in their classrooms.
- the parish employed a person to combine all parish/school finance and manage the budget.

Progress Report, (Name of School)

CHAPTER III SELF-STUDY PROCESS

The (name of school) Community is commended for their Self-Study efforts. The willingness and energy required to be involved in such a new process was evident in the dialogue with the various representatives of the school community. The evidence shows that the development of the Student Learning Expectations was an effort of the principal, faculty, staff and in addition is being supported by the administration, students, and parents.

(Name of School) Student Learning Expectations

- I. Effective Communicators Who:
 - appropriately and coherently articulate through verbal, written, and technological skills.
 - communicate effectively through the arts.
 - share with others regardless of race, color, religion, gender, or economic background.

- II. Responsible Citizens Who:
 - are globally and environmentally concerned.
 - practice social justice, understand diversity, and preserve the dignity of others.
 - understand the civic duties and responsibilities of an American citizen.
 - volunteer time, energy, and talent to community.
 - respect authority and each other.

- III. Self-Directed Learners Who:
 - incorporate and exhibit the Discipline With Purpose skills.
 - set realistic goals, priorities, and strive for achievement.
 - display initiative and independent study skills.

- IV. Active Catholics Who:
 - practice social justice as a tenet of Catholic Social Teaching.
 - respect self through healthful living in mind, body, spirit.
 - demonstrate knowledge of the Catholic faith and church.
 - understand Catholic teachings by participating in liturgies, demonstrate an active prayer life, and receive sacraments.

- V. Quality Producers Who:
 - demonstrate mastery of basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics.
 - use cooperative skills to achieve goals.
 - actively participate in the arts, academics, and physical education.
 - identify, analyze, apply, and evaluate information.

(Name of School) accomplished the five key outcomes and the Self-Study reflects the school's program for its students.

It is evident that the (Name of School) faculty and staff were involved in the Self-Study process in varying degrees. Following an in-service by the Superintendent of Schools during which she explained the Self-Study process, the faculty began to develop the Schoolwide Learning Expectations in the fall of 2001. The administration, faculty, and staff participated in developing and/or refining the Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Upon their completion these

Self-Study Process, (Name of School)

expectations were presented in the Fall of 2002 to the students, parents and pastor, displayed in the classrooms, and included in the Parent/Student Handbook.

The Self-Study process has helped focus all aspects of school life on the richness of its philosophy and commitment to developing the whole child. The Student Learning Expectations specifically solidify the philosophy and mission as the school community joins together to share the responsibility of reaching the vision for all students.

The stakeholders' primary involvement in the process included responding to the surveys sent to parents, students, and clergy. Responses were summarized and included as further data for the Visiting Committee. The curriculum evaluation committees prepared in-depth studies in the subjects of religion and mathematics.

When all data had been compiled into reports, the committees met to identify the strengths of the school, to target areas for improvement, and to establish a School Improvement Action Plan. The review included a focus on what students learn, how students learn, and how assessment is used throughout the curriculum in relation to the developed Student Learning Expectations.

(Name of School) has developed an appropriate School Improvement Action Plan in which areas for growth and improvement are noted and the Schoolwide Learning Expectations are indicated in each case. The school recognizes that each subject area and all aspects of the school's program need to be examined in view of the Student Learning Expectations. The School Improvement Plan has an attainable timeline, strategies for implementation, persons responsible, resources, assessment, and reporting.

Progress will be monitored annually and stakeholders should be kept informed on the progress of the School Improvement Plan.

Sharing the completed Self-Study as well as the Visiting Committee report with all of the stakeholders would be a positive recognition and a continued support of the role of parents as primary educators in the education of their children.

Self-Study Process, (Name of School)

CHAPTER IV QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAM

A. Organization for Student Learning

1. School Philosophy and Mission

To what extent has the school established a clear statement of philosophy that reflects a commitment to Catholic identity, thoroughness of instruction, a focus on the needs of the whole person, parents as primary educators, teachers as facilitators of learning, and recognition of the dignity of all members of the school community?

The school philosophy was amended in 1996. As the philosophy is reviewed and refined, the role of parents should be supported by naming them as primary educators. Each of these documents should clearly reflect a commitment to Catholic identity, emphasize challenging academics, focus on the needs of each child, present parents as primary educators who work with faculty and staff to foster learning and encourage students to maintain a Catholic identity.

2. Governance

To what extent does the school administration (pastor and principal) seek input/participation from members of the school community, adopt policies which are consistent with the school philosophy and mission, and drive the learning expectations for the school, delegate implementation to the professional staff and is committed to sharing the Catholic vision, mission and goals?

While the pastor has ultimate authority, he delegates authority to the parish administrator. The principal delegates classroom and other daily responsibilities to the individual teachers. The principal, in collaboration with others, is responsible to ensure implementation of policy and a Catholic vision. As the role of the School Advisory Board is refined and reviewed, more parent participation should be sought to serve as School Advisory Board members. The role of the professional staff is to implement policy as directed by the administration.

3. School Leadership

To what extent does the school leadership encourage the cultivation of Catholic values, and the spiritual formation of the school community, focus the energies of the school on achievement of the student learning expectations, empower the staff, and ensure shared accountability for learning?

Primary responsibility for the cultivation of Catholic values, spiritual formation, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations should be through the leadership of the principal who will work closely with the pastor, parish administrator, School Advisory Board, assistant principal, faculty, parents, and the student body.

Teachers are expected to continue professional growth. The principal is responsible for promoting shared responsibility for Schoolwide Learning Expectations among all stakeholders.

4. Staff

To what extent are the school leadership and staff professionally qualified and dedicated to the school's philosophy and mission, and committed to ongoing professional development that will promote student learning? To what extent are the administration and staff prepared to lead by example and work collaboratively with parishes to create communities of faith?

The school administration and faculty should be professionally certified or in the process of meeting state and diocesan requirements. Teachers are expected to set yearly goals, to continue professional development, and to

Organization for Student Learning, (Name of School)

continue their faith formation. The faculty collaborates with the parish community to create and live a community of faith. Instruction and activities in the Catholic faith are provided for the benefit of the entire community.

5. School Environment

To what extent is the school a safe and healthy learning environment, which fosters community and the achievement of religious and educational goals and is characterized by trust, professionalism, and high expectations for each student, and a respect for diversity?

Through various programs such as breakfast, hot lunch and extended day care, the safety and health of the students are promoted. The *Discipline with Purpose* program fosters community and helps students achieve both religious and educational goals. The implementation of the program should be reviewed and revised on a yearly basis. Teachers should work to set realistic expectations for each student. Various types of recognition of achievements are in place to foster self-esteem. Economic and cultural diversity is addressed through ongoing assistance to families and special celebrations.

6. Reporting Student Progress

To what extent does the school leadership and staff regularly review and report to the rest of the school community student progress toward accomplishing the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

Plans have been made to use the Schoolwide Learning Expectations as a basis for a schoolwide improvement plan. The school should, in collaboration with all stakeholders, prepare a three-five year plan based on the Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Currently, individual student progress is reported through progress reports, report cards, and conferences. Students with learning difficulties are assessed by local public school districts and appropriate recommendations are suggested.

7. School Improvement Process

To what extent does the school leadership facilitate school improvement as a process which (1) drives plans of action that embody quality learning for students, (2) has school community commitment and involvement and (3) effectively guides the work of the school; and does the leadership and instructional staff in cooperation with the rest of the school community demonstrate accountability through the monitoring of the school wide Action Plan implementation?

Recommendations from the previous WASC/WCEA Visit have been addressed. The three-five year plan should be reviewed and revisited yearly by all stakeholders. Philosophy, mission statement, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations are the basis for the School Improvement Action Plan to provide faith formation and quality instruction for all students.

Areas of Strength for Organization for Student Learning

- The students are polite, respectful, caring individuals.
- The faculty and staff demonstrate a caring attitude toward the students and school community.
- Student Council is an active organization that demonstrates leadership and teamwork.
- The school has a mission statement, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations that reflect a commitment to achievement.
- The administration and faculty collaborate with the school/parish community to create a safe, peaceful, loving environment.

Organization for Student Learning, (Name of School)

- The faculty strives to grow through professional meetings and faith formation.
- Realistic student learning expectations, a basis of an overall school improvement plan, are in place.

Areas for Growth for Organization for Student Learning

- Faculty turnover making implementation of student learning expectations and consistency in programs difficult
- Involvement of all stakeholders in the implementation of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations and the School Improvement Action Plan

Organization for Student Learning, (Name of School)

CHAPTER IV QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAM

B. Curriculum and Instruction

1. What Students Learn

To what extent does the school provide a challenging, comprehensive and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose, strengthens Catholic identity and results in the student achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

(Name of School) provides a well balanced curriculum that endeavors to develop the whole child. The Schoolwide Learning Expectations as well as the school's mission and philosophy statements allow for student growth.

Social justice issues are strongly addressed through a variety of social service projects. (Name of School) provides strong examples for the students to use in building their Catholic identity through consistent participation in weekly liturgy, prayers, devotions, and an awareness of the needs of others.

Learning expectations are presented through classroom instruction. Opportunities are given to build real life problem solving skills. (Name of School) attempts to address the varied needs of its student population by emphasis on Catholic educational ideas, social justice projects, and through character building programs.

2. How Students Learn

To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning and formational experiences which actively engage students and are consistent with the school's philosophy, mission and Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

As demonstrated in the mission statement, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations, the professional staff understands the importance of creating an environment that challenges the whole child. Through weekly staff meetings and lesson planning the staff reflects on diocesan curriculum standards. Varied teaching strategies are used to actively engage students in the learning process. Through liturgy, daily prayers, and devotionals the professional staff teaches and reinforces Catholic values. Students learn to take ownership for their own learning and achievement.

3. How Assessment is Used

To what extent does the school leadership encourage the cultivation of Catholic values, and the spiritual formation of the school community, focus the energies of the school on achievement of the student learning expectations, empower the staff, and ensure shared accountability for learning?

Traditional and alternative forms of assessment are used continually to provide ongoing evaluation of students. A variety of tools for assessment including national standardized tests, and portfolios are used to determine individual student needs and expectations. (Name of School) reviews, updates, and incorporates new educational materials, as funding is available.

Curriculum and Instruction, (Name of School)

Areas of Strength for Curriculum and Instruction

- Active participation in social justice programs/activities
- Academic and emotional assistance available for the students
- A strong Catholic identity shared by (Name of School)

Areas for Growth for Curriculum and Instruction

- Articulation of the scope and sequence of curriculum in current diocesan guidelines
- Full utilization and implementation of *Discipline With Purpose*
- Review and refinement of curriculum and resources
- Continuation of on-going professional development

Curriculum and Instruction, (Name of School)

CHAPTER IV

QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAM

B. Curriculum and Instruction

IN-DEPTH STUDY: RELIGION

1. What Students Learn

To what extent does the school provide a challenging, comprehensive and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose, strengthens Catholic identity and results in the student achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

(Name of School) provides a curriculum that is aligned with the diocesan curriculum guidelines and flows from the mission statement of the school. The school guides students in life-long spiritual growth based on Catholic principles and values.

The students are challenged to make choices based on Catholic values. The curriculum expectations help students to communicate effectively. Emphasis is placed on relating Religion to the real world and applying what is learned to daily lives. Problem solving is included in the curriculum by focusing on Gospel values. Strong emphasis is placed on global as well as local social justice issues. The *Discipline With Purpose* program incorporates problem solving as a developmental skill. Service projects are an integral part of student learning.

2. How Students Learn

To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning and formational experiences which actively engage students and are consistent with the school's philosophy, mission and Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

A variety of strategies for student learning are consistent with the school's philosophy and mission statement. As the curriculum is reviewed and refined, the role of the parents as primary educators should be emphasized. A copy of the School Improvement Action Plan should be given to parents to reinforce the learning that takes place.

The school uses the *Discipline With Purpose* model. Christian service is stressed to students as a way to live their faith. Students confirmed that consistent collaboration exists between students and teachers.

3. How Assessment is Used

To what extent does the school leadership encourage the cultivation of Catholic values, and the spiritual formation of the school community, focus the energies of the school on achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, empower the staff, and ensure shared accountability for learning ?

The pastor plays an important role in preparation and participation in weekly liturgies. School leadership facilitates student led morning prayer. The administration is in the process of empowering each member of the staff to facilitate the achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations throughout the school. A variety of assessment tools is used by the staff which include self-evaluation, journaling, testing, observation, dramatic re-enactment and portfolios.

Curriculum and Instruction (Religion), (Name of School)

The use of these assessments provides a basis for improvement of instructional strategies. Curriculum review is based on assessment results.

4. Faith Experience

To what extent does the school community place high priority on frequent prayer and liturgical experiences that are developmentally and liturgically appropriate and meaningful as well as spiritual formation and support of the religious mission of the school?

(Name of School) community places a high priority on frequent prayer and liturgical experiences that are developmentally and liturgically correct and meaningful. There are a variety of prayer experiences throughout the day as well as various forms of school prayer and spiritual involvement throughout the school year.

Service to others is a vital component of the faith experience. The parents as well as school personnel are involved in sacramental preparation. The principal and pastor are very active in the spiritual leadership of the school as are members of the parish staff. (Name of School) community is dedicated to helping each student and staff member become a responsible and active Catholic.

Curriculum and Instruction (Religion), (Name of School)

CHAPTER IV QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAM

B. Curriculum and Instruction

IN-DEPTH STUDY: MATHEMATICS

1. What Students Learn

To what extent does the school provide a challenging, comprehensive and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose, strengthens Catholic identity and results in the student achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

(Name of School) provides a mathematics curriculum which follows the diocesan guidelines and is reflective of the school's philosophy and student learning expectations. The mathematics curriculum addresses the following learning expectations:

<u>Responsible Citizen:</u>	Students use the <i>Discipline With Purpose</i> model.
<u>Self-Directed Learner:</u>	Students use organizational skills, graphing, sequencing and estimating.
<u>Active Catholic:</u>	Students practice social justice by using fair practices, consumerism and service projects.
<u>Quality Producer:</u>	Students apply skills in realistic situations by using measurement methods, practice consumer math skills and use writing skills to create word problems.

2. How Students Learn

To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning and formational experiences which actively engage students and are consistent with the school's philosophy, mission and learning expectations?

Classroom observation revealed that students at (Name of School) are actively engaged in learning through a variety of lessons, activities, and evaluation of their progress. Students participate in cooperative groups, discussions, skills practice, and special projects. The most frequently observed instructional materials were textbooks, worksheets, manipulatives, games, puzzles, and flash cards.

3. How Assessment is Used

To what extent does the school leadership encourage the cultivation of Catholic values, and the spiritual formation of the school community, focus the energies of the school on achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, empower the staff, and ensure shared accountability for learning?

Teachers use a variety of assessment methods to evaluate achievement in mathematics. The assessment methods were designed and implemented to support the mission, philosophy and Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Students use written tests, portfolios, pre/post tests, oral evaluations, and the standardized testing program. Presently the allocation for additional resources for the mathematics curriculum is not possible.

Curriculum and Instruction (Mathematics), (Name of School)

CHAPTER IV QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAM

C. Support for Student and Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

1. Student Connectedness

To what extent are students connected within the faith community to a system of support services, and activities and opportunities to assist them in meeting the challenges of the curricular/co-curricular program in order to achieve the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

The students at (Name of School) are connected to a system of support services, activities to assist them in meeting challenges of the curricular and co-curricular programs. The support services are designed to address the spiritual, academic, social, emotional, aesthetic, and physical development of each student.

The administration, faculty, and staff of (Name of School) provide opportunities to assist students in meeting Schoolwide Learning Expectations and achieve academic excellence.

The students of (Name of School) actively participate in Friday liturgies, daily classroom prayers, daily religion classes, Bible study, bi-weekly rosary recitation, feast day observances, reconciliation, sacramental programs, retreats, service projects, use and display of religion symbols in the classroom, and as models of Christian behavior.

Emphasis is placed on the ability to see the needs of others through service. Social Justice issues are addressed through Haitian aid, as well as service at a wide variety of diocesan locations and local outreach programs. Families are required to complete 30 hours of service, and 8th grade students are required to complete 8 hours.

Student governance is encouraged through a very active and involved Student Council. Civic responsibility is accomplished through Junior Achievement and through their consistent practice of Social Justice.

Academic support is available to at-risk or struggling students through the Project Volunteers, City Parks and Recreation program, Title I service, and faculty assistance on an as-needed basis.

Support for student physical and emotional self-awareness is created through the 8th grade retreats, the DARE program, Family Life Services, Catholic Schools Week activities, special projects, and an on-site Catholic Charities counselor.

2. Parent/Community Involvement

To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's established support system for students?

Parental involvement is vital to the school support system for students. Opportunities for parents include membership on the School Advisory Board, volunteering as room parents, participation in fund raisers, and other special events. Additional opportunities for parent participation include the Christmas Program, sacramental preparation and sports activities.

Formal and informal communication with the parents is accomplished through weekly newsletters, Wednesday Family Folders, agenda books in some grades, annual Parent/Teacher Conferences, informal phone and written message communication, and parent meetings.

Support for Student and Personal, Spiritual, and Academic Growth, (Name of School)

Parent comments suggested a need for greater parental involvement in a wider range of activities.

Areas of Support for Student and Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

- Administration, faculty and staff working to foster an environment of open communication among the school community
- (Name of School) offers outside activities to develop the whole student

Areas for Growth for Support for Student and Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

- Greater parental support of the academic program
- An outreach program to increase parental involvement in a wider range of activities

Support for Student and Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth, (Name of School)

CHAPTER IV QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAM

D. Resource Management and Development

1. Resources

To what extent are the resources available to the school sufficient to sustain the school program, reflect financial practices, and responsible stewardship and effectively used to carry out the school philosophy, mission, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations?

(Name of School) provides a loving and caring environment where each child can grow and develop through academics and the integration of Catholic Christian values.

The budget is prepared by the principal and presented to the School Advisory Board for review. The parish administrator, responsible for streamlining funds for the parish and the school, then approves the final budget.

The major expenditure in the school budget is for faculty and staff salaries and benefits, followed by the cost of books and materials. Instructional programs for students are funded by using a combination of school, state, and federal monies. In addition, funds from diocesan programs, other parishes, grants, and fundraisers make it possible for (Name of School) to provide for the needs of the students.

The (Name) program made it possible for improvements to the physical facilities at (Name of School). Funds were used to provide complete wiring of the school, new lights, new ceilings, a new roof, new public address system, a new fire alarm, new cafeteria equipment, and air conditioning.

(Name of School) is expecting to meet the school's needs for the coming year.

2. Resource Planning

To what extent does the administration execute responsible planning for the future?

The staff is attempting to develop goals and objectives in regards to building improvements, textbook replacement, and finance allocation.

The principal pursues grant applications and endowment money. Parish administrators and school board members are currently attending workshops geared toward school finance. Public relations, fundraising, and grant writing are being researched to be utilized more efficiently. Currently a five-year plan that will look at long-range spending and school needs is being developed.

Resource Management and Development, (Name of School)

Areas of Strength for Resource Management and Development

- (Name of School) used funds from (a diocesan program) to improve school facilities
- Sources of funding include: Adopt-a-Student program, sister parish adoption, hiring of parish administrator, donations, community involvement, and diocesan tuition assistance program

Areas for Growth for Resource Management and Development

- Sources of funding for instructional materials and equipment
- Inclusive development committee for future resource planning
- Working budget available to all stakeholders

Resource Management and Development, (Name of School)

CHAPTER IV QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAM

Synthesis of Schoolwide Areas of Strength And Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow Up

General Comments

(Name of School) is to be commended for using the new protocol, *Process for School Improvement*. The Core Committee, working with the faculty, and staff developed the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, sharing them with the students and parents for additional discussion.

The *Process for School Improvement* assisted the school community in clarifying their learning expectations, identifying key areas of strengths and targeting key issues for school improvement which is resulting in a schoolwide effort of improved instruction. It is quite obvious that (Name of School) has a high priority of incorporating Christian values and Catholic beliefs in all facets of school life.

The WASC/WCEA process has and will continue to direct the school community in recognizing the role of Schoolwide Learning Expectations as the foundation for their school improvement.

The Visiting Committee synthesized a listing of strengths as well as key issues they wish to present to the (Name of School) community. The evidence that supports this synthesis includes:

- The Process for School Improvement Self-Study
- The Progress Report from the WASC/WCEA Recommendations, 1996
- Interviews with the pastor, parish administrator, principal, faculty, staff, parents, and students
- Classroom observation
- Self-Study Evidence

Schoolwide Areas of Strength

- Students communicate a strong sense of school pride as an active faith community and participate in social justice practices throughout the year.
- A strong Catholic identity is shared by the (Name of School) community.
- The parents are committed to and sacrifice for Catholic education.
- Academic and emotional support is available for students.
- A newly expanded computer lab with upgraded computers and programs is available and utilized.

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Growth

- Involvement of parents in the school, working together for the benefit of the students
- Schoolwide implementation of *Discipline With Purpose* as the philosophy for student behavior

Synthesis of Schoolwide Areas, (Name of School)

CHAPTER V SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Visiting Committee found that the School Improvement Action Plan developed by the Core Committee and accepted by the faculty was generated from three target areas they recognized as necessary for school improvement as a result of their Self-Study findings. In order to enhance their Schoolwide Learning Expectations, (Name of School) chose the following three target areas/goals:

Math Computation:	Students will improve their math computation skills to 80% proficiency.
Vocabulary Words:	Students will increase vocabulary words and skills used in the classroom.
Language Usage:	Students will improve written language organization and convention skills to 80% proficiency. The focus will be on capitals, complete sentences, end marks, and paragraphs.

Their school improvement plan is already in progress and the further development of it will be greatly enhanced as the total school community is able to be more fully involved in its implementation.

The preceding target goals are valid and important areas needing improvement, but are not the sole areas in need of growth. Additional areas from the Self-Study that need to be addressed and incorporated into the School Improvement Action Plan have been identified by the Visiting Committee as *Critical Areas for Follow Up*. These are:

1. Involvement of parents in school, working together for the benefit of the students.
2. Schoolwide implementation of Discipline With Purpose as the philosophy for student behavior.

By addressing these Critical Areas for Follow-up, student learning will be enhanced.

The stated School Improvement Action Plan does outline specific areas for growth revealed from the Self-Study. Specific steps, time frames, persons responsible, and outcomes desired are all delineated in the plan. As the school community revisits its Plan following the school visitation, it would be of merit to review the Critical Areas of Follow-up recommended in this report to support their commitment to improving student learning.

The (Name of School) community has clearly demonstrated their commitment, dedication, and professionalism in its pursuit of school improvement. These three ideals ensure the future success of (Name of School) in providing a quality Catholic education and in the on-going process of school improvement.

An annual report detailing progress inclusive of the School Improvement Action Plan will provide a document recognizing progress made and assist in reviewing the focus for the next year.

Continuing a model such as the focus groups, with active participation by all parties, will certainly provide an essential venue for discussion among grades, levels and subject areas as well as the ongoing implementation of the School Improvement Action Plan.

School Improvement Plan, (Name of School)

**RECOMMENDATION FOR TERM OF ACCREDITATION
(Catholic Elementary Schools)**

Please type or use word processor to facilitate copying and legibility.
(In the event of a formal appeal, this document will be provided to the school principal.)

Name of School Visited:

Enrollment: _____ Grades to be Accredited: _____
 Self Study Form: _____ *Process for School Improvement*
 Address of School: _____
 Name of School District/Diocese: _____

Date of Visit:

	A Term Of Accreditation For Six Years: A term of six years with an annual Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report submitted to the arch/diocese.
	A Term Of Accreditation For Six Years With A Review: A term of six years with an annual Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report submitted to the arch/diocese, and during the third year of the six year term a mid-term summary progress report on the schoolwide critical areas for follow-up submitted to the WCEA Commission.
X	A Term Of Accreditation For Three Years: A term of three years with a Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report and a one day revisit by a two member committee during the third year. (Annual Progress Report submitted to arch/diocese.)
	A Term of Accreditation for One Or Two Years: A Term of one or two years with a Progress Report on the Visiting Committee report and a one day revisit to serve as a "warning" that unless prompt attention is given to the schoolwide critical areas for follow-up, and serious attention to the total report, accreditation may be denied. (Annual progress monitored by arch/diocese.)
	Denial of Accreditation: Denial of accreditation based on conditions details in the Visiting Committee Report.

Signatures

_____	_____
Committee Member	Committee Member (WASC Representative)
_____	_____
Committee Member	Committee Member
_____	_____
Committee Member	Committee Member
_____	_____
Committee Member	Committee Member

_____	_____	_____	_____
Committee CHAIRPERSON	Date	Office Phone #	Home Phone #

**THE JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT
AND RECOMMENDATION FOR A TERM
OF ACCREDITATION**

This is a confidential report. Unless the Visiting Committee Report is contested by the school, the contents of the justification statement are known only to the Visiting Committee, the Arch/Diocesan Superintendent, the WCEA Commissioners, and the WASC Commission.

The justification statement closely follows the WASC/WCEA criteria and purposes for school evaluation. Committee members are asked to indicate the degree to which the school fulfills the criteria and supporting areas of strength and supporting critical areas for follow-up that support their decisions.

The rationale for the term of accreditation depends upon the degree to which the criteria are fulfilled in the Visiting Committee Report, and the consensus of the Visiting Committee.

The justification statement must be signed by each member of the Visiting Committee before departure. The Chairperson sends the original copy to the Arch/Diocesan Commissioner.

DOCUMENTATION AND JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

For proper processing, please complete the information in the box:

Chair Name	Name of School Visited
Chair's Work Phone	Chair's Home Phone
E-mail Address (If applicable)	

On the following pages, circle the rating that best fits the results of the Self-Study and the Visit that was selected through Visiting Committee dialogue and consensus.

- Highly Effective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provide evidence of (1) the achievement of a high degree of student learning with respect to the category of criteria and (2) a strong operable school improvement process not requiring external monitoring.
- Effective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provide evidence of (1) the achievement of student learning with respect to the category of criteria and (2) the need for some minimal outside monitoring to support the school improvement process.
- Somewhat Effective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provided limited evidence of (1) the achievement of student learning with respect to the category of criteria and (2) the necessity for outside monitoring to support the school's improvement.
- Ineffective:** The results of the Self-Study and the Visit provide little, if any evidence of (1) the achievement of student learning with respect to the category of criteria and (2) the necessity for consistent outside monitoring to support the school's improvement process.

Also, on the following pages, provide a brief narrative that describes the degree to which the school supports student learning through each category of criteria.

An accreditation term will be based upon a school demonstrating the following:

1. Involvement and collaboration of stakeholders in doing the Self-Study that accomplishes the Key Outcomes of the Self-Study.

Visiting Committee Reading: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

It was evident as we interviewed various stakeholders that the involvement of the school community was limited. The only involvement the pastor, parish administrator, Parent Advisory Board, and parents were invited to have was in completing their respective surveys. The pastor and parish administrator each received a copy of the finished Self-Study document prior to the visitation. The new staff members had minimal introduction to the process, thus were unable to respond and implement comfortably during interviews and class observations.

2. The defining of the school's purpose through Schoolwide Learning Expectations and academic standards.

Visiting Committee Reading: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Some faculty members chose to be inactive in parts of this process, so the core committee (leadership team) appears to have developed the learning expectations. The expectations were presented to a group of parents and to the students after their completion. In order for these Schoolwide Learning Expectations to be totally internalized, it will be most important that all stakeholders are included in the process and take responsibility for its implementation. The Schoolwide Learning Expectations are inclusive and have tremendous potential as a commitment is made by all with leadership provided by the school's administration.

3. The use of a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, and analyze student performance data.

Visiting Committee Reading: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The data has been analyzed by some, but in order for the impact to be felt across the grades and curriculum, it will be important for communication to be deliberately planned between grade levels to discuss curriculum and student performance. Frequent turnover of staff, lack of orientation for newcomers, loss of students, unclear curriculum sequence, and lack of dialogue among/between grade and curriculum levels need to be addressed in order for student performance to be fully assessed. The very clear School Improvement Action Plan does provide an avenue for some of the above to take place.

4. The acceptable progress by all students toward clearly defined schoolwide learning expectations, academic standards, and other institutional and/or governing authority expectations.

Visiting Committee Reading: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

It is evident that the faculty is aware of student needs and implements various programs/strategies to track student progress. Continued dialogue with previous and future grade level teachers would definitely benefit the students in the learning process in each of the classrooms. Reviewing the "target goals" that helped them develop their School Improvement Action Plan would provide an instrument for future growth.

5. An *Organization for Student Learning* that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Reading: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The process is only just beginning. In reviewing the criteria for this category, it was evident that leadership and governance need to be addressed in order for active involvement to be in place and impact the future of the school. The hiring of a parish administrator has made a positive impact and shows progress. Sharing responsibility with other stakeholders will enhance the educational program at (name of school). The students are in a very caring community and demonstrate a spirit of enthusiasm. There is much potential when the committed effort of all is in place.

6. *Curriculum and Instruction* that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Reading: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Efforts are being made to provide a well balanced curriculum that will develop the whole child. The target goals chosen show specific areas needing improvement and traditional methods of assessment are being implemented in most grades. Well planned articulation between grades and curriculum areas would greatly enhance the program and provide better learning opportunities for all students. The student involvement in social justice programs/activities is commendable.

The *Discipline With Purpose* program is effective in a few classes. Revisiting and utilizing the program in each classroom would provide the results desired as stated in the Self-Study. Reviewing curriculum via the annual in-depth study by all faculty and administration would also support high achievement for all students.

7. *Support for Student Personal, Spiritual, and Academic Growth* that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Reading: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Offering opportunities to develop the whole child is evident at (name of school). The opportunities for student growth both inside and outside of the classroom are commendable, particularly the specific emphasis in social justice activities and programs at each grade level. The students are truly happy and live their faith in this school environment; this is a definite strength of the school. The involvement of parents would provide much needed support for the school personnel.

8. *Resource Management and Development* that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Reading: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The support received from the diocesan offices and other parishes has provided much needed financial assistance to (name of school). The recent hiring of the parish administrator has provided much needed leadership for the school and should continue to make an impact on the school community. Enrollment continues to decrease and should be addressed. The three key words that summarize the immediate needs at (name of school) in this category are cooperation, coordination, and communication.

9. The alignment of a long-range schoolwide Action Plan to the school's areas for critical growth to support high achievement of all students.

Visiting Committee Reading: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

In developing the School Improvement Action Plan, the faculty has specific areas that begin to touch the critical areas for growth. In our classroom observations we did not see data in each of the classrooms that gave witness to the implementation and involvement by each teacher. Evidence that was collected over a year's time was clearly evident in a couple of classrooms but not reflected in all. Analysis of the data collected is not taking place by most at this time because it isn't being encouraged or processed by the school's leadership.

10. The capacity to implement and monitor the schoolwide Action Plan.

Visiting Committee Reading: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

All of the stakeholders need to understand and be willing to implement the Schoolwide Improvement Action Plan. Presently this is only taking place with some of the faculty who do have knowledge and

understanding of what is needed. Teacher turnover and the resistance of some is a definite impediment. The students are alive and very enthusiastic for learning.

11. The use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive school improvement.

Visiting Committee Reading: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The *Progress Report* was completed by the principal for the Self-Study with no review by the core committee or stakeholders. The report indicated that all of the recommendations had been addressed. However, there appeared to be no active study or implementation since three to four years after the Visit. There was difficulty in receiving current data for review by the Visiting Committee during the visitation.

Provide a brief narrative which summarizes the Visiting Committee's rationale for the recommended term:

▪ **Accreditation term options seriously considered:**

The Visiting Committee individually and collectively reviewed each section of this document and followed it with extensive discussion regarding their observations, interviews, and the evidence provided. Reviewing the various terms of accreditation and their determining factors, the Visiting Committee consensually decided to strongly recommend a term of accreditation for **three years**. Other terms were not deemed appropriate by this Visiting Committee.

▪ **Reasons for the *term recommended*:**

The reasons for the recommendation of a term of accreditation for **three years** are as follows:

The administration, faculty, and staff are committed to Catholic education and professional growth. Their commitment to the children is very evident. The pastor, parish administrator, advisory council, and parents are positive about the children and the education they have received over the years.

The pastor and parish administrator have a concern about the decrease in enrollment and the fiscal impact for the future.

The parents are not actively involved with the school though some express a desire to be invited to participate.

The School Improvement Action Plan is clear, comprehensive, and do-able. With direction and encouragement from the school's leadership, as well as the commitment of all stakeholders, it will be an effective plan.

The ownership of the Self-Study and School Improvement Action Plan was not evident to the Visiting Committee. There was resistance from some faculty during the process that resulted in the responsibility of developing the Self-Study being assumed by a few. As a Visiting Committee we feel as though follow-through would not be strong unless there is outside monitoring during the next three years.

During our interviews, observations, and review of evidence, the committee members were very aware that this was not a concerted commitment of all members of the school community. The lack of leadership in supporting and encouraging the process was a major reason for this happening. We do believe there is potential and recommend that a **three year term with a revisit** would help facilitate this being a reality.

The children are genuinely happy children who are in a caring, safe environment.