



# **WASC/CDE FOCUS ON LEARNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT GUIDE**

**2022 EDITION**

## WASC/CDE FOL CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT GUIDE

Produced by:

ACS WASC

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## Foreword

The WASC/CDE Focus on Learning Continuous Improvement Guide celebrates the ongoing collaboration between the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the California Department of Education. The WASC/CDE Focus on Learning Continuous Improvement Guide is a self-study process that examines what students know and are able to do. This process helps a school identify and implement school improvement needs and supports accountability and earns an accreditation status.

California's Accountability and Continuous Improvement System is predicated on the goals of strengthening teaching and learning, and increasing the institutional capacity of schools, districts, and state agencies to continuously improve. The local, state, and federal accountability system uses a concise set of state and local indicators to demonstrate the progress of California county offices of education, districts, and charter schools toward meeting the needs of their students.

By reporting performance on multiple measures that impact student performance across the eight Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) priorities, the accountability and continuous improvement system provides a more complete picture of what contributes to a positive educational experience for all students. It also promotes equity by clearly identifying for district and school leaders, educational partners, and the public any indicators where there are disparities among student groups. This ensures that disparities among student groups are highlighted and acted upon to close opportunity and achievement gaps for all. Additionally, for districts and schools in need of additional assistance, the more complete picture of performance helps ensure that the additional resources and supports are focused on the student and program areas where they are most needed and most likely to improve student outcomes.

LCFF is an accountability tool to assist districts and schools to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas in need of improvement across all LCFF priority areas. The California School Dashboard incorporates performance data on multiple measures to provide parents, educators, and the public with a more complete picture of how schools are meeting students' needs. The state and local measures are based on factors that contribute to a quality education, including high school graduation rates, college and career readiness, student test scores, English learner (EL) progress, suspension rates, attendance rates, and parent engagement. Important features of this edition of the WASC/CDE Focus on Learning Continuous Improvement Guide include:

- The integration of the LCFF state priorities and the California School Dashboard results within the self-study process.
- The revision of the WASC/CDE criteria to strengthen the evaluation of the school's program.
- Suggestions to strengthen the schoolwide action plan/SPSA (School Plan for Student Achievement) to identify growth targets and monitor progress aligned with the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

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## The WASC Mission

*WASC advances and validates quality ongoing school improvement by supporting its private and public elementary, secondary, and adult member institutions to engage in a rigorous and relevant self-evaluation and peer review process that focuses on student learning.*

## Overview

### **Focus on Learning: Overview Rationale**

The WASC/CDE Focus on Learning (FOL) Process is a continuous school improvement process that provides the core elements to guide a school in an in-depth look at the effectiveness of the current school program to determine what needs to be improved. The FOL process is driven by the following concept questions:

How well are all students learning and achieving?

Is the school doing everything possible to support high achievement and prepare all students to be college and career ready in a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment?

How does the school know?

### Why Accreditation

Accreditation involves the school in conducting a rigorous self-assessment or self-study compared to a set of research-based criteria. From this self-assessment, the school determines a course of action as defined in its schoolwide action plan/SPSA (School Plan for Student Achievement).

Accreditation:

1. Certifies to the public that the school is a trustworthy institution of learning.
2. Validates the integrity of a school's program and student transcripts.
3. Fosters improvement of the school's programs and operations to support student learning.
4. Assures a school community that the school's purposes are appropriate, equitable, and being accomplished through a viable educational program.
5. Assures the school community that the school upholds and assesses diversity, equity, and inclusion for all students served regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, or gender.
6. Provides strategies to facilitate change of the school's educational program through regular assessment, planning, implementing, monitoring, and reassessment.
7. Assists a school/district in establishing its growth areas for continuous improvement as a result of the perpetual accreditation cycle that includes:
  - School self-assessment of the current educational program for students.
  - Insight and perspective from the visiting committee.
  - Ongoing school staff assessment of schoolwide action plan/SPSA goals, progress and impact on student learning through the intervening years between self-studies.

### What is the WASC/CDE Accreditation Continuous Improvement Process?

The accreditation process is a perpetual cycle of assessing, planning, implementing, monitoring, and reassessing: the process is guided and assisted by the self-study, visit, and follow-up. Annually, schools are expected to summarize the degree to which all students, including disaggregated student groups, are accomplishing the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, identified major student learner needs, and academic standards.

In addition, schools review the progress on the current schoolwide action plan/SPSA in relation to student achievement and California Dashboard indicators and make appropriate revisions. Every six years, a school conducts an in-depth self-study to examine overall progress accomplished since the last self-study and the effectiveness of its current program based on the

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WASC/CDE research-based criteria in relation to student achievement, and district goals, actions, and services described in the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). This results in findings supported by evidence and the development of an updated schoolwide action plan/SPSA. The completed school report is sent to the visiting committee members for careful study no later than six weeks prior to the visit. Using the results of the visit, the school modifies and implements its action plan/SPSA and so continues the cycle of improvement.

Annually, the school reviews data/information/evidence of progress guided by the schoolwide action plan/SPSA needed to address ongoing needs of students, staff, and the school.

### Guiding Principles

The WASC accreditation Guiding Principles provide the foundation for the WASC/CDE FOL cycle of continuous improvement that can be divided into three components: the self-study, the visit, and the ongoing follow-up. Based on these principles, the components of the accreditation process empower a school to:

- Ensure a culture of involvement and collaboration among leadership, staff, students, teachers, parents, and other educational partners.
- Ensure the culture nurtures and supports the well-being of all students.
- Demonstrate through the school program that the vision, mission, and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile are being accomplished.
- Evaluate students' achievement of the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile and the academic standards.
- Use multiple ways to analyze data to demonstrate student achievement, including conducting student and staff surveys/interviews, examining student work, and observing students engaged in learning.
- Evaluate its program effectiveness concerning (1) its impact on student learning based on the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, student learner needs, and academic standards; and (2) meeting an acceptable level of quality per the WASC criteria.
- Align its prior and current prioritized findings to the schoolwide action plan/SPSA focusing on areas of greatest student need and, therefore, teacher/school needs.
- Implement and monitor the ongoing improvement results and the impact on student learning.

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Below is the Focus on Learning model process that elaborates how the Guiding Principles are imbedded into the WASC/CDE Focus on Learning self-study, visit, and follow-up components.

### WASC/CDE FOL: A Model Process Adaptable to a School's Organization

#### 1. Self-Study

##### *Suggested Organization and Timeline for the Self-Study*

The Focus on Learning process is the work of the school community organized into three types of groups:

- ✓ Leadership Team
- ✓ Focus Groups (interdisciplinary groups of educational partners) or
- ✓ Job alike, e.g., departments, grade levels, subject areas, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

Normally, the formal self-study process takes place over a 12-18 month period to allow sufficient time for collaborative conversations.

##### **Use of WASC/CDE Criteria**

The analysis of the school's program takes place in relation to research-based guidelines for school improvement that focus on student achievement of the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile and academic standards. A school will examine all aspects of its program against these five categories:

- A. Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources
- B. Curriculum
- C. Learning and Teaching
- D. Assessment and Accountability
- E. School Culture and Support for Student Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Growth.

##### **School's Vision, Mission, and Schoolwide Learner Goals/Graduate Profile and District LCAP**

This vision, mission, and goals of the district are equity driven and provide the school's foundation for establishing schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile and academic standards: what all students should know, understand and be able to do; these drive the instructional

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program and support the operations of the school. The collective vision of the school's educational partners for all students is reflective of the district's goals for student success. District and school goals focus on current and future learning needs of students and agreements about expectations for success and academic performance.

### School's Academic Standards

Academic standards define the concepts, skills, and knowledge that students should know and be able to do in each curricular area, the level at which students are expected to demonstrate this knowledge, and other grade-level expectations for performance. California Content Standards guide the development of curriculum and the assessment system and assist the schools in defining the quality accomplishment of the complementary schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile and the degree to which all students are achieving them.

### Importance of Data/Information/Evidence Analysis

The self-study revolves around an in-depth analysis of data and information that will enable a school to take a careful look at the following:

- Student learner needs
- Schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile
- California Dashboard indicators and formative and summative assessments of academic standards and social emotional well-being
- Effectiveness of the program and operations based on WASC/CDE criteria and the impact on learning for ALL students.

Examples of strategies which will be used for this review are the examination of student work; observing students engaged in learning; interviewing students about what they are learning; reviewing assessment and other data; and analyzing feedback from parents, graduates, and the community.

Through the Focus Groups, participants will analyze programs in relation to their impact on students and to determine areas that need to be modified to improve student learning. The work of each Focus Group is organized around one of the WASC/CDE categories, with emphasis upon the identified major student learner needs and related schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile. Each Focus Group answers the question: *What are the implications of each major student learner need and the related schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile for this Focus Group?* For example, participants will examine the extent to which the school culture and student support category contribute to students' higher achievement in reading as an identified major student learner need.

Within the job alike or educational partners, participants analyze student data and achievement in relation to the major student learner needs, the academic standards, schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, and quality of the school program based on the WASC/CDE criteria.

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While Focus Groups are the structure recommended by WASC, there may be other ways for schools to determine the best way to organize themselves for the self-study process.

### Updating the Schoolwide Action Plan/SPSA

Using the results of the self-study, the school modifies and implements its action plan/SPSA and continues the cycle of improvement. After the visit, there may be further refinements, and the school annually reviews data information and evidence of progress. This annual review is guided by the schoolwide action plan/SPSA goals to address ongoing needs of students and staff. The school modifies the plan as needed.

## 2. Visit

After careful study of the school report, a visiting committee composed of fellow educators spends three and one-half days at the school. The purpose of the visit is to observe, gather additional evidence and provide an outside perspective to the school team from educators who are thoroughly familiar with the WASC/CDE criteria.

The visiting committee provides insight to the school through dialogue with the Leadership Team, Focus Groups, and with the educational partners and others about the self-study findings and the review of evidence and student work. The visiting committee, the Leadership Team, and Focus Groups collaboratively compare findings. The resulting discussion and written results assist the school in refining the schoolwide action plan/SPSA using the WASC/CDE research-based criteria as the basis to address the following:

- The major student learner needs
- California Dashboard Indicators and other metrics
- Alignment with LCAP goals.

## 3. Continuous Improvement Process

After the visit, the school refines and implements the schoolwide action plan/SPSA for continuous school improvement, integrating the growth areas identified by the visiting committee. The school annually reviews progress and refines the “next steps” in meeting the goals of the schoolwide action plan/SPSA.

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Evidence that all students are accomplishing the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile and academic standards, especially for the major student learner needs is the focus of the analysis of progress. The governing board and district are involved in the continuous school improvement process and ensure that the follow-up process is integral to district planning, analysis of California Dashboard indicators, and the LCAP goals.

### WASC/CDE Focus on Learning Schoolwide Criteria

#### A. Organization for Student Learning

##### 1. *Vision and Purpose*

The school has established a clearly stated vision and purpose reflecting students' needs, current educational research-based practices, with a focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and a belief that all students can learn and achieve. The school's purpose is further defined by schoolwide student goals/graduate profile and academic standards, supported by the governing board and the district Local Control and Accountability Plan.

##### 2. *Governance*

The school purpose is aligned with governing board goals and policies and focused on student achievement and well-being through data-driven decisions with the aim of preparing students for college and career readiness.

##### 3. *Leadership for Learning*

The school leadership, faculty, staff, and parent/community collaborate, make decisions, and initiate actions that focus on all students' needs and achievement. The result is accountability for implementing practices, programs, and providing services based on the school's purpose, student needs, and the schoolwide action plan/SPSA goals aligned with the district LCAP.

##### 4. *Qualified Staff and Professional Development*

Qualified staff and leadership facilitate achievement of the student academic standards and the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development. There is a systematic approach to continuous improvement through professional development based on student performance data, student needs, and research.

##### 5. *Resources*

The human, material, physical, and financial resources are sufficient and utilized effectively and appropriately in accordance with the legal intent of the program(s) and LCAP to support students in accomplishing the schoolwide student goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and college and career readiness expectations.

## **B. Curriculum**

### **1. *Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum***

All students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and the college and career readiness indicators in order to meet graduation requirements.

### **2. *Equity and Access to Curriculum***

All students have equal access to the school's entire program and the school prioritizes opportunity and advancement for all students. Students receive assistance with a personal learning plan to meet the requirements of promotion or graduation and are prepared for the pursuit of their academic, personal, and career goals.

## **C. Learning and Teaching**

### **1. *Student Engagement in Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences***

All students experience an equity-centered learning environment and are involved in challenging and relevant learning experiences reflecting schoolwide goals, academic standards, and college and career readiness indicators.

### **2. *Student-Centered Instruction through a Variety of Strategies and Resources***

All teachers use a variety of strategies and resources to create an equity-centered learning environment that actively engage all students in creative and critical thinking, problem solving, and application of learning.

## **D. Assessment and Accountability**

### **1. *Reporting and Accountability Process***

The school leadership and instructional staff use effective and equitable assessment processes to collect, disaggregate, analyze, and report schoolwide student performance data to the school staff, students, parents, and other educational partners. The analysis of data guides the school's programs and processes, the allocation and usage of resources, and forms the basis for the development of the schoolwide action plan/SPSA aligned with the LCAP.

### **2. *Using Student Assessment Strategies to Monitor and Modify Learning Progress***

Teachers employ a variety of appropriate assessment strategies to evaluate student learning. Students and teachers use these findings to modify the learning/teaching practices to improve student learning within and across grade levels and departments.

## **E. School Culture and Support for Student Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Growth**

### **1. Family and Community Involvement**

The school leadership employs a wide range of culturally sensitive and inclusive strategies to encourage family and community involvement, especially with the learning/teaching process.

### **2. School Culture and Environment**

The school leadership focuses on continuous school improvement by providing a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning and develops a culture that is characterized by trust, inclusivity, professionalism, and high expectations for all students.

### **3. Multi-tiered Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Support**

All students receive appropriate multi-tiered personal, social-emotional, and academic support to help ensure student learning, college and career readiness, and success. Students with special talents and/or needs have access to an equitable system of personal support, activities, and opportunities at school and in the community.

## **WASC/CDE Terminology**

*To ensure common understanding of the language used in the criteria and the WASC/CDE Focus on Learning Continuous Improvement Guide, the following explanations are provided for clarity and context.*

### **Accreditation**

A process of quality assurance or continuous school improvement that examines all aspects of the school program and operations in relation to the impact on high-quality student learning. A school conducts a self-study that serves as the basis for review by a visiting committee of professional educators who assist in assessing and providing reflections on the effectiveness of the school's program and operations and their impact on student learning. Using the results of the visit the school further refines and implements, monitors and modifies as needed its action plan/SPSA in this continuous cycle of school improvement.

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### Accreditation Status

A status granted by the WASC Commission within the WASC accreditation cycle of continuous improvement whereby the school demonstrates the capacity, commitment, and competence to support high-quality student learning and continuous school improvement. The status is based on the evidence identified in the school's report and reviewed during the school visit that indicates the following: the degree to which high achievement by all students is occurring and the capacity of the school to implement, monitor, and accomplish the schoolwide action plan/SPSA aligned to the areas of greatest need impacting student achievement and well-being.

### Accreditation Factors Based on Accreditation Principles

The important aspects of the accreditation process based on the accreditation principles:

- Accomplishment of the vision, mission, and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile
- High achievement of all students in relation to schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile and academic standards
- Use of multiple ways to analyze data about student progress and achievement
- Evaluation of the program effectiveness based on schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile informed by greatest student needs and academic standards
- Alignment of prioritized findings to a schoolwide action plan/SPSA focusing on student achievement
- Continuous school improvement/ accountability
- Total involvement and collaboration of all educational partners.

### All Students

A reference to the belief that all students can learn at high levels and should have sufficient and equitable support to enable them to achieve at high levels of learning. Every student enrolled in the school, regardless of background or characteristics, is included.

### Challenging, Relevant, and Coherent Curriculum

A demanding curriculum that is viewed as a broadly conceived concept and is based on themes and concepts that encourages students to achieve at high levels, to use "higher order thinking skills," and to apply and synthesize knowledge that prepares them to be globally competent.

### Current Educational Research and Thinking

Educational research is the scientific field of study that examines education and learning processes and the human attributes, interactions, organizations, and institutions that shape educational outcomes. Scholarship in the field seeks to describe, understand, and explain how learning takes place throughout a person's life and how formal and informal contexts of education affect all forms of learning.

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### Diversity

The presence, acceptance, appreciation, and sensitivity to the differences and needs of people. The concept of diversity embraces the wide range of human characteristics used to recognize individual and group identities, including, but not limited to, ethnicity, race, national origin, age, personality, sexual orientation, gender, class, religion, ability, and linguistic preferences.

### Educational Partners

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A general term referring all members of a school community: administrators or leadership, governing board, teachers, support staff, students, parents, community and business partners.

### Equity

WASC is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access to high-level, rigorous learning opportunities for all students. Equally important is that all children and adults be treated fairly and with respect for their humanity. Regardless of race, language proficiency, socioeconomic status, gender, religion, and/or other identities, all students at WASC member institutions have a right to expect access to the opportunities and support needed for them to be successful.

### Equity-Centered Learning Environment

Every school is a place where all students learn, develop and thrive, providing a learning environment where all students' experiences and access to opportunity determines their developmental and academic outcomes.

### Graduate Profile

A school's graduate profile can be considered synonymous with schoolwide learner goals, identifying what all students need to know, understand, and demonstrate upon promotion or graduation.

### Inclusion

All students, regardless of any challenges they may have, are engaged in educational classes and experience high-quality instruction, supports and interventions that enable them to meet success in the core and elective curriculum.

### Individualized Learning Plan

An Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) is developed collaboratively by students, teachers and other staff as a way to help students achieve short-and long-term learning goals.

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### **Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)**

The LCAP is a three-year plan that describes the goals, actions, services, and expenditures to support positive student outcomes that address state and local priorities.

### **Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)**

The LCFF identifies how all local educational agencies (LEAs) in the state are funded, how they are measured for results, and the services and supports they receive to allow all students to succeed to their greatest potential.

### **Multi-tiered Systems of Support**

An integrated, comprehensive framework that focuses on state standards, core instruction, differentiated learning, student-centered learning, individualized student needs, and the alignment of systems necessary for all students' academic, behavioral, and social success.

### **Portfolio**

A collection of representative student work.

### **Purpose**

A clarification of the beliefs, values, vision, mission, and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile held by members of the school community about what the school can do for students with respect to knowledge, skills, and understandings through the implementation of the school program.

### **Root Cause Analysis**

Root cause analysis (RCA) is the process of discovering the root causes of problems in order to identify appropriate solutions.

### **School Community**

The school community includes (1) local business and industry, educational institutions, agencies, and service organizations; (2) parents, students, school board; and (3) all employees.

### **Schoolwide Action Plan/School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA)**

The overall improvement strategies as a result of the self-study process that is reviewed and refined regularly based on progress and impact on the learning of all students. Schools are guided by one action plan that has integrated all initiatives and aligns with the LCAP.

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### **Schoolwide Learner Goals/Graduate Profile**

What each student should know, understand, and be able to do upon exit (e.g., graduation) from the school, or by the time the student completes the planned program. These learner goals are collaboratively developed and represent the focus of the entire school community based on current and future learning needs of the students. The schoolwide learner goals are synonymous with the concept of a graduate profile.

### **Self-Study Coordinator (SC)**

The facilitator/leader of the school's accreditation process in collaboration with the school leadership.

### **Student Learner Needs**

Based on the analysis of multiple sources of achievement and social emotional data, the school identifies major student learner needs, such as expository writing, reading, critical thinking skills, or mental health to emphasize to better support student growth and progress.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students with learning needs who benefit from additional physical, mental, behavioral, or emotional support services to accomplish learning goals to their maximum potential.

### **Student Voice and Agency**

Key concepts for empowering students to be meaningfully engaged in decision making related to processes for learning. School teams listen to students and ensure that decisions, actions and designs are informed by their voices, needs and aspirations.

### **WASC/CDE Criteria and Indicators**

WASC/CDE criteria are research-based guidelines for school improvement that focus on student achievement of the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile and academic standards. Indicators highlight important points of the WASC criteria. Directions guide the analysis, examination, and evaluation of the school in relation to the WASC criteria and indicators; this results in specific findings supported by evidence and the determination of strengths and growth areas.

## Online Learning

*Definitions applicable to all types of online or distance instruction:*

### **Asynchronous Learning**

A learning environment in which everyone participates at the different times. Examples are email, online discussion forums, message boards, blogs, podcasts, etc.

### **Synchronous Learning**

A learning environment in which everyone participates at the same time.

### **Online Instruction**

Education in which instruction and content are delivered primarily over the Internet for course completion and earned credit.

### **Blended/Hybrid Learning**

Blended/Hybrid Learning is any time a student learns in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home and learns at least in part through online delivery with some element of student control.

### **Online Support Materials**

Refers to the general use of online resources by teachers in the traditional classroom environment. This use of online materials in classrooms is a supplement to instruction and is not considered online instruction that leads to course completion and the awarding of credit.

## Coordinator Information and Guidelines: Self-Study

**Establish Timelines:** After participating in the first WASC/CDE self-study training session, establish:

- A general calendar for the major self-study events
- A more detailed timeline of specific committee meetings and tasks to be accomplished.

**Ensure Support:** Establish support mechanisms such as board and district understanding and assistance, professional time for staff members, and technical help.

**Consult with WASC Advisor/Coach:** Contact your WASC assigned advisor/coach for any questions or clarifications needed.

**Conduct an Orientation on CDE/FOL Continuous Improvement:** (Refer to the Overview)  
The importance of the school's continuous school improvement process for successful student learning based upon the joint WASC/CDE Focus on Learning accreditation process and the periodic deeper look at the school's program, i.e., the self-study. Points to emphasize:

- The importance of total involvement and collaboration
- Clarity of "what do we want students to know, understand and be able to do?" (i.e., the interrelationship between schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile and academic standards)
- The understanding and use of the WASC/CDE research-based criteria
- The importance of using data and the self-study findings (1) to raise the urgency for system change; (2) to recommit to a vision of high academic achievement for all students; and (3) to investigate further the causes, barriers, impediments, challenges, remedies, and solutions to maximize student achievement, learning and social emotional well-being.
- The nature and purpose of the visiting committee
- Accreditation status determination.

### **Establish School Committees:**

Each Focus Group or Committee of the Whole usually concentrates on one of the WASC/CDE categories (A-E) and examines the effectiveness of their program based on the criteria.

This analysis is completed in relation to two to three identified major student learner needs, related schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile and academic standards that the Leadership Team selected based on student achievement data.

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- Ensure all staff have information and data needed for their responsibilities such as a Google folder, Dropbox, etc.

**Train leadership team, Focus Groups, job alike (home groups)/educational partners in roles and responsibilities, including strategies in group dynamics and data analysis.**

**Training should emphasize:**

- A review of the basic purpose of the self-study, visit, and follow-up: a continuous school improvement process.
- The role of Focus Group chairs as:
  - Group facilitators of committee discussions and synthesis of findings
  - Coordinators for gathering evidence, especially analysis of student work and observations of students working
- The essential participation in regular meetings for dialogue and sharing findings.
- The specific tasks for a Focus Group and job alike groups.
- The importance of verification through in-depth gathering and analysis of evidence and demonstrating the effectiveness of the school compared to criteria and indicators.
- The importance of all committee members' understanding the use of the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, academic standards, the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) data, the California School Dashboard results, and all WASC/CDE criteria with emphasis upon the assigned criteria.

## Timeline

### Suggested Timeline for Spring or Fall Visits

The WASC/CDE FOL Continuous Improvement Guide is divided into important sections: the Self Study, the Visit, and Follow-up, i.e., continuous improvement. The Coordinator Checklist outlines key responsibilities followed by a summary of expectations for writing the self-study, planning for the visit and continuous improvement activities to support the coordinator's leadership role. This suggested timeline provides an overview of the flow of activities and expectations for a successful accreditation experience involving the entire school community.

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<b>Time Frame for Visits</b>	<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>12 Months Before Visit</b> Chapters 1 and 2 (Progress and Profile Analysis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze local and state data and draft Chapters 1 and 2</li> <li>Share with staff and educational partners and revise as needed</li> <li>Clarify major learner needs and learner goals/graduate profile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrative team with assistance from appropriate district leadership</li> <li>All teachers and staff</li> </ul>
<b>10 Months Before Visit</b> Chapter 3 (Analysis of Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assign a lead teacher for each of five criteria categories for Chapter 3</li> <li>Prioritize time for analysis of evidence and to discuss and write findings for each criterion and summary for each of the five criteria categories.</li> <li>Synthesize analysis and findings into a first draft of Chapters 1-4</li> <li>Request assistance from WASC coach and visiting chair as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entire school team (teachers, staff and educational partners)</li> <li>Administrative team</li> </ul>
<b>6 Months Before Visit</b> Chapter 4 (Summary of identified major student learner needs, prioritized strengths and growth areas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Synthesize analysis and findings into a first draft of Chapters 1-4</li> <li>Request assistance from WASC coach and visiting chair as needed</li> </ul>	
<b>3 Months Before Visit</b> Chapter 5 (Revision of schoolwide action plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share and discuss first draft of report, review Chapter 4 for agreement by school team, revise draft report as needed</li> <li>Revise School Plan to reflect report findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entire school team</li> <li>Entire school team, School Site Council</li> </ul>
<b>2 Months Before Visit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize school report, plan for visit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrative team</li> </ul>

## School Committee Structure

### School Committee Organization

Careful thought should be given to the formation of the school committees. To conduct a meaningful self-study, the school is expected to involve the total staff by establishing the suggested committees; however, these should be adapted to fit local conditions. Below are the suggested responsibilities and potential membership of committees for the self-study process.

#### School Leadership Team

Teams typically include the principal, assistant principal, instructional coaches, counselors, teacher leaders, and other school leaders and provide a systematic way for schools to implement their most important priorities. The WASC Coordinator is often a member of the Leadership Team.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

- ✓ Facilitate the school community's understanding of continuous improvement and how the WASC accreditation process is a part of ongoing school success and improvement
- ✓ Facilitate the review and refinement of the vision, mission, schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, and major student learner needs
- ✓ Assist the Organization Focus Group in responding to A1, Vision and Purpose; A2, Governance; and A5, Resources
- ✓ Facilitate the entire analytical self-study process, including the data analysis and identification of the major student learner needs
- ✓ Create and regularly refine the schoolwide action plan/SPSA using findings of schoolwide Focus Groups
- ✓ Coordinate the follow-up process to monitor the implementation and the accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan/SPSA that has integrated all schoolwide initiatives.

In smaller schools, Leadership Teams and governance groups may be composed of the same people, a Committee of the Whole reflecting a smaller staff and decreasing duplication of efforts.

#### School Profile Committee (optional)

Team typically includes administrator(s), select certificated staff, district data analysis person, students, and parent leaders.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

- ✓ Develop and refine the student profile
- ✓ Summarize and analyze data from multiple local and state sources
- ✓ Identify preliminary major student learner needs.

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### Committee of the Whole

Schools with a smaller number of students may have only one teacher per subject area, or only a few individuals providing all of the support services. In these cases, subject area support group discussions may occur in formats different from those described above, as long as the impact on students of each subject area and each support function is discussed. The school may have a “Committee of the Whole.”

To conduct a meaningful self-study, the school is expected to involve the entire staff by establishing the suggested committees; however, this structure may need to be adapted to fit local size and conditions.

Given the small size of many schools, the determination of the focus groups often changes to a “committee of the whole” approach whereby the entire school team is collaboratively completing the tasks and program analysis. Establishing a committee of the whole means the entire school team collaborates to analyze and discuss multiple types of evidence, agrees on overall findings and gives input as designated staff members.

Often, one or two staff members serve as co-leads to guide discussions and write to the criteria/indicators within each of the five criteria categories (Self-Study Report, Chapter 3). Additionally, other educational partners may be assigned to each group, such as the counselor, psychologist, or transition specialist.

Using the committee of the whole structure works well with a staff of 8-10 or less. Collective accountability for completing given tasks within an identified time frame needs to be monitored to ensure the report is completed and shared, leading to clear identification of major student learner needs and levels of programmatic effectiveness across the criteria. The school team reviews the sections of the CDE/FOL process guide and determines the best way for the school team, given the small school size, to accomplish the tasks and modifies or develops a timeline based on working backwards from the WASC visit dates. After an understanding of tasks and timelines is reached by the entire school team, the process begins: gathering and analyzing appropriate information and evidence, always emphasizing learner needs, formal times for dialogue among all teachers, leadership and others, and the succinct writing regarding the findings.

### Schoolwide Focus Groups

A Focus Group is composed of a representative cross-section of certificated staff members from the various disciplines and other educational partners; including administrator(s), teacher leaders, department chairs, counselors, support staff select certificated staff, district data analysis person, students, and parent leaders. The suggested size of a group is 12 to 15 for larger schools, 3-4 for smaller ones. “Committee of the Whole” may be a more effective structure for assessing the small school programs.

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### Roles and Responsibilities

- ✓ Synthesize all data about student learning and the criteria
- ✓ Determine major student learner needs, strengths, and growth areas based on data analysis
- ✓ In large schools, there may be more than one Focus Group that examines a category of criteria, or the criteria can be separated.

### Job Alike Groups or Educational Partners

These group(s) may be organized by content area, grade level team, student leaders, parent leaders, counselors, or other support staff. Often these members also serve on focus groups to communicate the needs and priorities more specific to their roles and the specific circumstances at the school.

### Roles and Responsibilities

- ✓ Analysis of what is being taught and learned with respect to major student learner needs, selected schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, academic standards, other curricular references, and WASC/CDE criteria.
- ✓ Analysis of program support services for students. Support staff groups include groups that contribute to the success of all students. Analysis of the school program from a student perspective with respect to major student learner needs, selected schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, and WASC/CDE criteria.

Analysis of program from a parent/community perspective with respect to major student learner needs, selected schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, and WASC/CDE criteria.

## Self-Study Format

- Self-Study Template

## Coordinator Information and Guidelines: Visit

### 1. Communicate with visiting committee chair

Prior to the visit, the visiting committee chair will be in communication with the Self-Study Coordinator (SC) and principal to answer questions and give assistance. The principal and the chair should establish a date for the chair to visit the school for a previsit.

During the previsit, the chair will become familiar with the school and the self-study progress, offer guidance in conducting the self-study, and begin to develop a detailed schedule for the visit. The chair will maintain regular communication. This includes feedback on draft sections of the self-study report. (Refer to the [Visiting Committee Chair Checklist](#), [Previsit Preparation](#).)

### 2. Make housing and visit arrangements for the visiting committee (VC)

The SC arranges housing and adequate work space for the visiting committee. Technology support and equipment should be made available to the visiting committee, including access to evidence via hyperlinks and/or Dropbox.

*Note: Schools directly reimburse visiting committee members for expenses incurred during the previsit and the self-study visit. This includes meals, mileage, and other accreditation visit-related expenses. In most cases, lodging should be arranged and directly paid for by the school and guided by district policy.*

### 3. Establish schedule

The VC chair and the school work collaboratively on the schedule: see the hyperlink to the sample visit schedule and template in the back of the document.

### 4. Submit self-study to WASC and visiting committee chair

The SC submits the self-study report to WASC in a single pdf or Word document (reference and support materials not required) through the Action Cards of the visit on the Reviews/Visits page of the School Portal: [acswasc.force.com/school\\_portal/s/login/](https://acswasc.force.com/school_portal/s/login/).

Additionally, the SC emails a copy of the report to the visiting committee chair.

### 5. Complete WASC visit preparation

SC verifies all visiting committee visit arrangements: housing, meals, technical and clerical support, school map, master schedule, parking facilities, name tags, etc. SC ensures the availability of electronic references to support the self-study findings and representative student work samples that have been analyzed.

### 6. Be available throughout visit

Throughout the visit the visiting committee chair will regularly communicate with the principal and the self-study coordinator; the visiting committee will meet daily with the Leadership Team regarding the visiting committee's findings.

## Coordinator Information and Guidelines: Continuous Improvement Process

1. After the visit, the leadership team integrates the suggestions and growth areas for continuous improvement identified by the visiting committee in the report into an updated schoolwide action plan/SPSA with input from the school community.
2. Within six weeks following the visit, the school submits:
  - A copy of the modified schoolwide action plan/SPSA to WASC in a single pdf or Word document electronically through the Action Cards of the visit on the Reviews/Visits page of the School Portal: [acswasc.force.com/schoolportal/s/login](https://acswasc.force.com/schoolportal/s/login)
  - Copies to all educational partners.



## The Self-Study

## The Self-Study

The outline of the five chapters presented in this section assists the school in accomplishing the Guiding Principles of the CDE/FOL accreditation process. They represent a model self-study process that schools may modify as long as they adhere to these Guiding Principles. Using the school's past progress and current data, the school will involve all faculty and other educational partners in evaluating the school's program based on the WASC/CDE criteria to determine the effectiveness of the programs/systems and their impact on student learning. The overall result will be an updated schoolwide action plan/SPSA that is developed and understood by all to support the school's journey of continuous improvement.

### Introduction

Participants

- ✓ Leadership Team

**Brief History, Background, and Programs:** Provide a brief history and background of the school, a concise description of programs offered, and a description or list of schoolwide strategies that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Comments on School's Self-Study Process:** Briefly describe how the faculty and staff and other educational partners were involved and collaborated in the self-study process.

### Chapter 1: Analyze and reflect upon the school's progress and the impact on student learning since the previous self-study.

Participants

- ✓ Leadership Team
- ✓ All staff and educational partners

### Chapter 1: Progress Report

**Significant Developments:** Describe any significant developments and their impact on the school and/or specific curricular programs since the last self-study visit.

**Process for Implementing/Monitoring Schoolwide Action Plan/SPSA:** Comment on the process for implementing and monitoring the schoolwide action plan/SPSA aligned with LCAP goals.

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**Progress on Schoolwide Action Plan/SPSA:** Summarize the progress on the current schoolwide action plan/SPSA, showing how the growth areas have been integrated within the plan.

**Addressing Student and School Needs:** Evaluate the degree to which major student learner needs, school needs and areas for growth have been addressed.

**Prior Accreditation Findings:** Analyze how the use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data are driving school improvement to better ensure high achievement for all students.

**Progress on Growth Areas not in Current Schoolwide Action Plan/SPSA:** Comment on why any growth areas for continuous improvement are not in the current schoolwide action plan/SPSA.

### Questions for Reflection

- Did the school discuss and describe significant developments and their impact?
- Did the school summarize progress on the school's needs or growth areas growth areas identified in the schoolwide action plan/SPSA, Did the report show how progress on the schoolwide action plan/SPSA impacted achievement of the major student learner needs and the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile?
- Did the school show how the growth areas for continuous school improvement that are no longer part of the schoolwide action plan/SPSA were addressed?
- Were the findings of progress in this chapter supported by data and/or evidence and reviewed and discussed by staff and key educational partners?

**Commented [NE2]:** Should this be "significant developments"? Or add a prior bullet "significant developments?"

## Chapter 2: Develop or refine the school profile based on the analyzed and disaggregated data and clarify the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile.

Participants

- ✓ Leadership Team

### Chapter 2a: School Profile

- **Existing Profile:** Review the school's current school profile.
- **Additional Data:** Gather the needed updated demographic and student performance data and perception data; see the [ACS WASC/CDE School Profile Guide](#) for guidance.

- **Assurance:** Ensure the updated school profile addresses the following:
  - Three years of data, if available
  - Data presented and linked through the use of appropriate charts, tables, and graphs
  - Data disaggregated, analyzed and interpreted.
- **Findings and Synthesis:** Provide findings noting trends and patterns.

## Chapter 2b: School Profile

- Summary: Include:
  - **Implications:** List the overall implications of the data.
  - **Preliminary Major Student Learner Needs:** Identify the two to three major preliminary student learner needs based on the data.

## Chapter 2c: School Profile

- **Review and Dialogue:** Dialogue about and modify the school profile and summary as needed. Provide access of the draft profile and summary to all certificated staff and other educational partners to review and comment on the following. Is there agreement on:
  - Who are the students?
  - What are the data findings?
  - What are the implications of the data, the major preliminary student learner needs, and important questions?
- **Use of the School Profile and the Summary:** After finalizing the profile and the summary, ensure access by all certificated staff and other educational partners for use in their Focus Group work. This may result in identifying other learner needs.
- **Update of School Profile as Needed:** Add additional data as it becomes available throughout the self-study process to the profile and the summary. As the self-study evolves, the profile and summary may need to be updated as additional data becomes available throughout the self-study process.

## Questions for Reflection

- Has the Leadership Team gathered and analyzed all required and pertinent data to identify the characteristics and trends of achievement of ALL the students?
- Has the Leadership Team identified key implications of the data from the Profile?

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- Have major preliminary student learner needs been identified and supported by the initial review of data?
- Have the certificated staff members and other educational partners reviewed and discussed the profile, including the vision, mission, and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, to confirm major preliminary student learner needs?

### Chapter 3: Evaluate the quality of the school program in relation to the five WASC/CDE categories with emphasis on the major student learner needs, summarize findings, and determine areas of strengths and areas for growth.

The categories are:

- A. Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, Staff, and Resources
- B. Curriculum
- C. Learning and Teaching
- D. Assessment and Accountability
- E. School Culture and Support for Student Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Growth

Participants

- ✓ Leadership Team: Guides and coordinates the process
- ✓ Focus Groups: Organized around the WASC/CDE categories; all certificated staff participate on Focus Groups
- ✓ Job alike (home groups): examples include departments, grade levels, subject areas, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

### Chapter 3: Evaluation of School Program

- **Understanding All WASC/CDE Criteria by Each Focus Group:** Review and discuss all five categories of criteria in order to understand that these concepts are guidelines for systematic school improvement. A suggested template for Chapter 3 can be found by accessing your [school portal](#).
- **Understanding of Assigned Criteria by Each Focus Group:** Discuss in detail the criteria and indicators to ensure understanding of their meaning.

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- **Determining Evidence/Information/Data Needed by Each Focus Group:** Based on the criteria/indicators/prompts, decide what data/ information/ evidence is needed to determine what currently exists and its impact on student learning.
- Include what specific data/information/evidence is needed from all, especially departments or grade level teams).
- Review the progress report data and profile including the impact of the data related to student learning and well-being, the major preliminary student learner needs, and important questions to guide the self-study process.
- **Analyzing Evidence/Information/Data by Each Focus Group:** Gather and analyze the data and information about the designated WASC/CDE criteria/indicators.
- **Job alike:** Gather and analyze the data and evidence that is needed by the Focus Groups, including the examination of student work, the observations of student engagement, walkthroughs, and student interviews or surveys.
- **Job alike:** Share findings with appropriate Focus Groups via a Google doc or through the job alike/PLC representatives on each Focus Group.
- **Summarizing by Each Focus Group:** Determine and summarize findings in response to the assigned category of criteria, including what has been learned about the major student learner needs and important related questions. Indicate the data and evidence that supports the findings. Hyperlinks to the data/evidence can be included.
- **Synthesizing Strengths and Growth Areas for Each Criteria Category by Focus Group:** For each category, prioritize the strengths and growth areas based on analysis of the criteria and indicators in the category.  
**Note:** Ensure there is a direct correlation and alignment with the written findings and supporting evidence.

### Questions for Reflection

- Was the analysis of the school program done in relation to the accomplishment of the major preliminary student learner needs, the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, and academic standards?
- Did the Focus Groups use the WASC criteria and indicators to analyze the levels of effectiveness of the school?
- How did discussion ensure the findings relate to supporting the major student learner needs in Chapter 2?
- How are the findings supported by data/evidence?
- How are the strengths and growth areas correlated and aligned to the findings and evidence?

## Chapter 4: Review and prioritize all strengths and growth areas for each category; reaffirm the identified major student learner needs.

### Participants

- ✓ Leadership Team and/or Student Profile Committee
- ✓ All educational partners

## Chapter 4: Prioritized Strengths and Growth Areas and Confirmation of Major Student Learner Needs

- **Development:** Generate a table (5 columns and 2 rows) that includes all the strengths (row 1) and growth areas (row 2) from the five categories. Use this table to cluster the strengths and growth areas in prioritized order from all five categories into themes or strands.
- **Dialogue:** Discuss and confirm strengths/growth areas and identified major student learner needs.
- **Dialogue:** Determine if the preliminary major student learner needs identified in Chapter 2, School Profile need to be changed or modified based on the Focus Group findings. Make appropriate changes in the major student learner needs, if applicable.
- **Dialogue:** Discuss how these themes or priorities inform what strategies/activities are needed to ensure that the major student learner needs including diversity, equity, and inclusion issues are being addressed in the schoolwide action plan/SPSA and comment on proposed next steps in the table.
- **Summarizing:** Provide a summary confirming the 3-4 major student learner needs based on the School Profile and the Focus Group findings. Cite data/evidence that supports the identification of the major student learner needs.

## Questions for Reflection

- Has the school obtained input from all members of the school community as the identification and the implications of the student learner needs are determined based on the profile data and Focus Group findings?
- Is there consensus on the major student learner needs?
- Is there consensus on the general themes and priorities that have emerged from the Focus Group findings?

- Has there been discussion on how these themes or priorities inform what the priorities are of the schoolwide action plan/SPSA?

## Chapter 5: Revise the schoolwide action plan/SPSA; establish an ongoing follow-up process to monitor implementation and accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan/SPSA.

### Participants

- ✓ Leadership Team and/or School Profile Committee
- ✓ School educational partners (Suggestion: use data teams; PLCs; Focus Groups; or job-alikes, departments, or grade levels)

## Chapter 5: Revision of Schoolwide Action Plan/SPSA

- **Review:** Review the Focus Group summaries (Chapter 3), the identified major student learner needs and the table of prioritized strengths, and growth areas (Chapter 4).
- **Modifications:** Use the table from Chapter 4 to determine the schoolwide action plan strategies/activities that should be modified based on the findings, strengths, growth areas, and major student learner needs.
- **Assurance:** Ensure that the schoolwide action plan refinements are aligned to the LCAP and include measurable student-focused outcomes that reflect the major student learner needs and addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.
- **Consensus:** Gather feedback, gain consensus, and ensure commitment of all staff and educational partners.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Describe the process to monitor student learning based on the major student learner needs, the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and the progress on implementing schoolwide action plan/SPSA.

## Questions for Reflection

- Were the schoolwide strengths and growth areas (categories A–E) used to revise the schoolwide action plan/SPSA?
- Is the schoolwide action plan/SPSA organized around measurable outcomes for all appropriate student groups?

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- Do the outcomes in the school wide action plan/SPSA address the major student learner needs as identified in Chapter 4?
- Is there a sound follow-up process that will be used to monitor the accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan/SPSA and modify the plan as needed?



## WASC Criteria and Indicators

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WASC/CDE criteria and indicators are research-based factors which positively influence learner outcomes. The criteria elaborate the attributes of the category and are italicized in the text. The indicators are more specific, observable and measurable characteristics of each criterion and guide the analysis of the school's organization and educational programs.

### Category A: Organization for Student Learning: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, Staff, and Resources

#### Directions for Vision and Purpose

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the Organization for Student Learning criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how the ***schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile reflect the vision and mission and impact student learning and well-being.***

#### Criterion A1: Vision and Purpose

*The school has established a clearly stated vision and purpose reflecting students' needs, current educational research-based practices, with a focus on diversity, equity, inclusion and a belief that all students can learn and achieve. The school's purpose is further defined by schoolwide student goals/graduate profile and academic standards, supported by the governing board and the district Local Control and Accountability Plan.*

- **A1.1 Vision and Schoolwide Learner Goals/Graduate Profile:** The school has established a clear, coherent vision and purpose and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile based upon high-quality standards, congruent with research and school practices, and aligned with district goals for students.
- **A1.2 Equity and Inclusion:** The vision and purpose of the school reflects a belief that all students can learn and achieve.
- **A1.3 Development/Refinement of Vision and Purpose:** There are effective processes in place to ensure involvement of all educational partners in the development and periodic review and refinement of the vision and mission, and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile.
- **A1.4 Communicating and Understanding Vision and Purpose and Schoolwide Learner Goals/Graduate Profile:** There are effective processes for communicating with all educational partners to ensure the understanding of the vision, purpose, and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile.

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**Suggested areas to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- Written statements of vision, mission, core beliefs, major student learner needs, schoolwide student goals/graduate profile, etc. Student outcome and performance data, both quantitative and qualitative data
- Staff understanding of research-based knowledge about learning
- District LCAP summary
- Understanding of national and state educational issues, trends, expectations and standards
- Interviews with staff, students, parents, board, community/business, district personnel and other educational partners to determine their level of involvement and commitment to the current school's vision, purpose and schoolwide student goals
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

### Directions for Governance

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the Organization for Student Learning criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how the **governing board impacts student learning and well-being**.

### Criterion A2: Governance

*The school purpose is aligned with governing board goals and policies and focused on student achievement and well-being through data driven decisions with the aim of preparing students for college and career readiness.*

- **A2.1 Relationship between the Governing Board and the School:** The school community has a clear understanding of the role of the governing board and how the governing board's decisions, expectations and initiatives guide the work at the school with the aim of improving academic achievement and well-being of all students.

**Suggested areas to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- Examples of opportunities parents have to participate in the school's governance and documentation of their actual participation

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- Alignment between the governing authority's policies and the school's vision, mission, schoolwide student goals/graduate profile and school programs that engage students in becoming college and career ready
- The school community's understanding of the governing board's role and how it aligns with, and differs from, the role of the school's leadership responsibilities and the role of the professional staff
- The school's community understanding and use of the Uniform Complaint Procedures from the district
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

### Directions for Leadership and Learning

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the Organization for Student Learning criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how **leadership actions impact student learning and well-being**.

### Criterion A3: Leadership for Learning

*The school leadership, faculty, staff, and parent/community collaborate, make decisions and initiate actions that focus on all students' needs and achievement. The result is accountability for implementing practices and programs, including providing services based on the school's purpose, student needs, and the schoolwide action plan/SPSA goals aligned with the district LCAP.*

- **A3.1 Broad-based and Collaborative:** The school's leadership, faculty, and staff a) assess data to determine student needs, and b) determine and implement strategies and actions, and c) monitor results and impact on student learning to support continuous improvement.
- **A3.2 Leadership Role in Accountability:** The school leadership and faculty demonstrate shared decision-making, responsibility, and self-reflection on actions and accountability expectations for implementing practices, programs, actions, and services that support student learning.
- **A3.3 School Action Plan/SPSA Correlated to Student Learning:** The schoolwide action plan/SPSA is directly correlated to and driven by the analysis of student achievement and other data and aligned with the LCAP.

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**Suggested evidence to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- Rosters, minutes of meetings, interview/survey data, and other indicators of inclusion showing that the school's planning process is broad-based and collaborative, and has the commitment and support of the educational partners
- The degree to which the actions of the leadership and staff are directly linked to student achievement and outcomes
- The degree of correlation between the schoolwide action plan/SPSA, the LCAP, and major student learner needs that emerge from the analysis of quantitative student achievement data
- Correlation between allocation of time, fiscal, and personnel resources and findings based on quantitative and qualitative data
- Benchmarks, academic and other performance indicators and accountability tools used in the monitoring process
- Staff involvement in the creation and ongoing monitoring/revision of the schoolwide action plan/SPSA structures for internal communications and the process for resolving differences and building consensus
- Structures, processes, and procedures for involving staff in collaboration, shared responsibilities and actions to support student learning
- Evidence of student and parent involvement in developing the schoolwide action plan/SPSA.
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

### Directions for Qualified Staff and Professional Development

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the Organization for Student Learning criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how **leadership and staff actions impact student learning and well-being**.

### Criterion A4: Qualified Staff and Professional Development

*Qualified staff and leadership facilitate achievement of the student academic standards and the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development. There is a systematic approach to continuous improvement through professional development based on student performance data, student needs, and research.*

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- **A4.1 Qualifications, Preparation, and Supervision of Staff:** The school understands district and school procedures to ensure that leadership and staff are qualified based on staff background and preparation. The school implements effective supervision and evaluation procedures in order to promote professional growth of staff.
- **A4.2 Professional Learning and Impact on Student Learning:** The school effectively supports professional development/learning and evaluates its effectiveness on teacher practices and student learning, with time, personnel, and resources to facilitate all students achieving the academic standards and college and career readiness expectations.
- **A4.3 Communication and Understanding of School Policies and Procedures:** The school implements a clear system to communicate administrator, faculty, and staff written policies, procedures, and handbooks that define responsibilities, operational practices, decision-making processes, and relationships of leadership and staff.

**Suggested evidence to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- Employment practices related to qualifications/statutory requirements
- Organizational charts and position descriptions
- Staff induction and ongoing support
- Performance evaluations and personal and schoolwide professional growth targets
- Professional development plans, calendars, minutes, evaluation, and feedback
- Achievement data supporting impact of professional development on student learning.

Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

### Directions for Resources

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the Organization for Student Learning criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how the ***distribution of resources impacts student learning and well-being.***

### Criterion A5: Resources

*The human, material, physical, and financial resources are sufficient and utilized effectively and appropriately in accordance with the legal intent of the program(s) and LCAP to support students in accomplishing the schoolwide student goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and college and career readiness expectations.*

- **A5.1 Resource Allocation Decisions:** School leadership and staff are involved in resource planning and allocation decisions aligned with student and personnel needs, and the goals of the schoolwide action plan/SPSA and the LCAP.
- **A5.2 Practices and Procedures:** Transparent district and school procedures are in place to develop an annual budget, conduct audits and follow quality accounting practices.
- **A5.3 Instructional Materials:** The policies and procedures for acquiring and maintaining adequate instructional materials and equipment, such as textbooks, other printed materials, instructional technology, manipulatives, and laboratory materials are current.
- **A5.4 Facilities Conducive to Learning:** The school's facilities are safe, functional, well-maintained, and sufficient to support student achievement and the educational program(s) including the use of technology and digital learning.

**Suggested evidence to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- Long-range planning process and educational partners involvement
- LCAP/SPSA plans, revisions and ongoing implementation
- Budgeting processes
- Facility plans
- Technology plans
- District resources supporting the school and major student learning needs
- School's charter (if applicable)
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

## WASC Category A. Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, Staff, and Resources Summary

*Prioritize and list the strengths and growth areas for the criteria and indicators in this category based on the school's identified major student learner needs.*

### Areas of Strength

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Areas of Growth

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



## Category B: Curriculum

### Directions for Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the Curriculum criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how the ***rigorous and relevant curriculum impacts student learning and well-being.***

### Criterion B1: Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum

*All students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and the college and career readiness indicators in order to meet graduation requirements.*

#### Indicators

- **B1.1 Current Educational Research and Thinking:** The school provides a rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum based on current educational research and thinking that supports the schoolwide student goals and academic standards and the college and career readiness indicators.
- **B1.2 Congruence with Schoolwide Student Goals:** There is congruence and integration among the concepts and skills taught, the schoolwide student goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and the college and career readiness indicators.
- **B1.3 Academic Standards and College and Career Readiness Indicators:** The school has college and career readiness indicators and academic standards for each subject area, course, and/or program that meet or exceed graduation requirements.
- **B1.4 Community Resources and Articulation:** The school engages with community partners and resources, articulates regularly with feeder schools, local colleges and universities, and technical schools.

#### Suggested evidence to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:

- Current educational research and relevant documents such as the California Frameworks and other related publications are used to assist schools in work with academic standards and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile
- The academic standards for each subject area, course, and/or program
- A-G, AP, and IB course approval documentation

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- The degree of congruence between the concepts and skills taught, the academic standards, and the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile
- Student work samples and student engagement observations
- Master schedule
- Articulation with K-8 feeder schools and local colleges and universities
- Demographics and distribution of students throughout the class offerings (to include gender, ethnicity, primary language and students with disabilities)
- How the instructional program and other activities facilitate access and accomplishment of goals for all students and how the program specifically supports English learners; foster youth; and special needs, economically disadvantaged, underachieving, and gifted students
- Processes for curriculum organization, development, evaluation, and revisions, including additional information on graduation requirements, credits, grading policies, and homework policy
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

### Directions for Equity and Access to Curriculum

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the Curriculum criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how the **equitable and accessible curriculum impacts student learning and well-being**.

### Criterion B2: Equity and Access to Curriculum

*All students have equal access to the school's entire program and the school prioritizes opportunity and advancement for all students. Students receive assistance with a personal learning plan to meet the requirements of promotion or graduation and are prepared for the pursuit of their academic, personal, and career goals.*

#### Indicators

- **B2.1 Variety of Programs and Full Range of Choices:** All students are able to make appropriate choices and pursue a full range of realistic college and career and/or other educational options. The school provides for career exploration or pathways, and preparation for postsecondary education for all students.
- **B2.2 Access to Curriculum, Including Real World Experiences, by All Students:** A rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum that includes real world

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applications is accessible to all students through courses/programs offered. Course enrollment patterns reflect the diversity of the school's students.

- **B2.3 Student-Parent-Staff Collaboration:** Students, parents, and staff experience a sense of belonging and value within the school community and collaborate in developing and monitoring a student's personal learning plan, including college and career and/or other educational goals.

**Suggested evidence to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- The variety of programs available to all students
- The extent to which parents, students, and staff collaborate in the development and monitoring of a student's personal learning plan, based upon students' learning styles needs and career and educational goals
- The extent to which the student population and school community influences curriculum offerings and choice and how the curriculum builds on the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the students and community
- Processes for monitoring students and examining their plans
- Processes for making changes in classes, programs
- Strategies for smooth transitions to post high school options (e.g., individual plans and programs in place which facilitate these transitions)
- Follow-up studies of a wide variety of graduates and/or exit surveys
- Extent to which all students have access to opportunities to explore real world applications of their educational interests
- Academic support program(s) to ensure students are meeting all requirements
- Process for regular review of student data that provides information on students meeting the graduation requirements
- Extent to which the school's educational program maintains the flexibility to accommodate changes in student interests and areas of career exploration
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

## WASC Category B. Curriculum Summary

*Prioritize and list the strengths and growth areas for the criteria and indicators in this category based on the school's identified major student learner needs.*

### Areas of Strength

1.

2.

3.

### Areas of Growth

1.

2.

3.



## Category C: Learning and Teaching

### Directions for Student Engagement

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the Learning and Teaching criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how the ***equity-centered learning environment impacts student engagement, learning and well-being.***

### Criterion C1: Student Engagement in Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences

*All students experience an equity-centered learning environment and are involved in challenging and relevant learning experiences reflecting schoolwide goals, academic standards, and college and career readiness indicators.*

- **C1.1 Results of Student Observations and Examining Work:** All students are involved in challenging and relevant work in an equity-centered learning environment.
- **C1.2 Student Understanding of Learning Expectations:** All students understand the standards/expected performance levels for each area of study in order to demonstrate learning and college and career readiness.

**Suggested evidence to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- Observations of students working and student work that illustrate the extent to which all students are involved in challenging and relevant learning experiences that reflect an equity-centered learning environment
- Observation, interviews, surveys to determine
  - how the school addresses the needs of students with diverse backgrounds and abilities
  - the extent to which students understand the standards and expected performance levels.
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

### Directions for Student-Centered Instruction

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the Learning and Teaching criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how **teachers' use of a variety of strategies and resources impact student learning and well-being**.

### Criterion C2: Student-Centered Instruction through a Variety of Strategies and Resources

*All teachers use a variety of strategies and resources to create an equity-centered learning environment that actively engage all students in creative and critical thinking, problem solving and application of learning.*

- **C2.1 Teachers Facilitate Learning:** Teachers use a variety of evidence-based instructional methodologies and encourage student agency within an equity-centered environment.
- **C2.2 Student Voice and Agency:** Student voice and agency are equally applicable for all students, empowering them to be meaningfully engaged in decision making about their own learning, strategic thinking, and problem solving.
- **C2.3 Digital Learning and Problem Solving:** Teachers use technology and digital learning tools to enhance and support student learning and help students solve real-world problems.
- **C2.4 Career Preparedness and Applied Learning:** Teachers provide learning opportunities that extend beyond the textbook and classroom, deepen students' depth of knowledge, and prepare them for college and careers.

**Suggested areas to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- Observation, interviews, and surveys to determine
  - the degree to which differentiated learning opportunities for students with diverse backgrounds and abilities are addressed through instructional approaches
  - the degree to which all teachers work as coaches to facilitate learning for all students
  - the degree to which student work shows the extent to which students are able to think, reason, and problem solve in group and individual activities
  - the degree to which digital resources are used with and by students to assist students in learning.
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

## WASC Category C. Learning and Teaching Summary

*Prioritize and list the strengths and growth areas for the criteria and indicators in this category based on the school's identified major student learner needs.*

### Areas of Strength

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Areas of Growth

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



## Category D: Assessment and Accountability

### Directions for Reporting and Accountability Process

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the Assessment and Accountability criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how the ***schoolwide reporting and accountability practices impact student learning and well-being.***

### Criterion D1: Reporting and Accountability Process

*The school leadership and instructional staff use effective and equitable assessment processes to collect, disaggregate, analyze, and report schoolwide student performance data to the school staff, students, parents, and other educational partners. The analysis of data guides the school's programs and processes, the allocation and usage of resources, and forms the basis for the development of the schoolwide action plan/SPSA aligned with the LCAP.*

- **D1.1 Professionally Acceptable Assessment Process:** The school leadership and instructional staff use effective and equitable assessment processes to collect, disaggregate, analyze, and report student performance data to all educational partners.
- **D1.2 Basis for Determination of Performance Level:** The school leadership and instructional staff have agreed upon the basis for students' grades, growth, and performance levels to ensure consistency across and within grade levels and content areas.
- **D1.3 Assessment of Program Areas:** School teams use assessment results to make changes in the school program, implement professional development activities, and allocate resources demonstrating a results-driven, continuous school improvement process.
- **D1.4 Schoolwide Modifications Based on Assessment Results:** School leadership partners with district leadership to periodically assess programs and expectations for students' academic growth and progress.

**Suggested areas to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- Extent to which student performance data is reported to all educational partners (community, parents, students, staff, district)
- Extent to which teachers and departments have agreed and made known to all educational partners the basis for students' grades, growth, and performance levels to ensure consistency across and within grade levels and content areas

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- Examples of how assessment results have led to recent changes in the school's program (staffing, professional development, curriculum choices, etc.)
- Examples of how the site, district, and board decisions on allocation of resources are influenced by schoolwide assessment results
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

### Directions for Student Assessment Strategies

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the Assessment and Accountability criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how the **teachers' use of assessment strategies to monitor and modify instruction impacts student learning and well-being.**

### Criterion D2: Using Student Assessment Strategies to Monitor and Modify Learning Progress

*Teachers employ a variety of appropriate assessment strategies to evaluate student learning. Students and teachers use these findings to modify the learning/teaching practices to improve student learning within and across grade levels and departments.*

- **D2.1 Monitoring Student Growth:** Teachers determine and monitor all students' growth and progress toward meeting the schoolwide student goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and college and career readiness expectations.
- **D2.2 Teacher and Student Feedback:** Teachers provide timely, specific and descriptive feedback in order to support students in achieving learning goals. Teachers use student feedback and dialogue to monitor progress and learn about the degree to which learning experiences are understood, relevant, and prepare students for college and careers.
- **D2.3 Demonstration of Student Achievement:** Teachers use the analysis of formative and summative assessments to guide, modify, and adjust curricular and instructional approaches.

**Suggested areas to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- Student work demonstrating the degree to which assessment allows students to apply knowledge and skills to complete real-life performance-based tasks
- Analysis of student work to determine achievement of schoolwide student goals/graduate profile, including those students with special needs

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- Examples of how teachers use formative and summative data to plan and modify curricular and instructional approaches
- Examples and extent to which progress of all students towards accomplishing the learning goals and academic standards is monitored
- Examples of how assessment results have caused recent change in the school's program
- Examples of how professional development activities and topics have been determined by schoolwide assessment results
- Extent to which students and parents are involved in the review process about student progress
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

## WASC Category D. Assessment and Accountability Summary

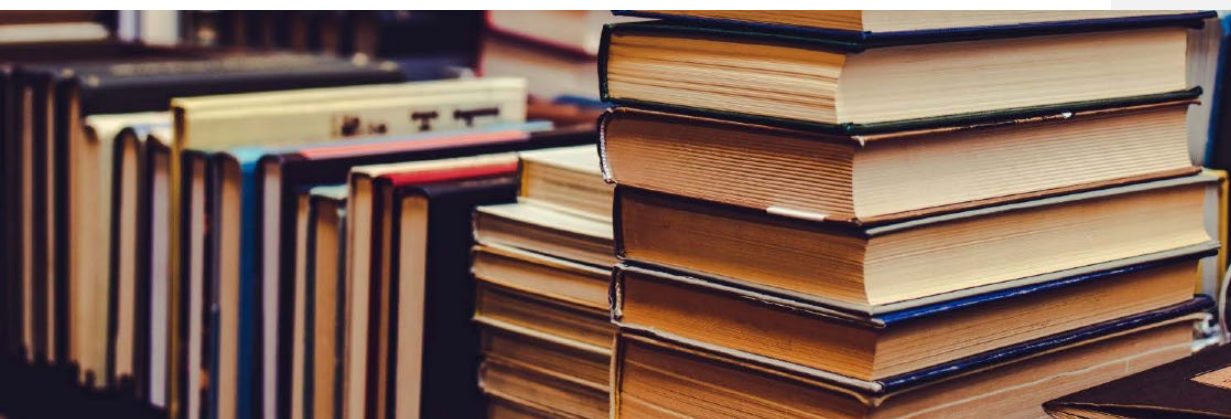
*Prioritize and list the strengths and growth areas for the criteria and indicators in this category based on the school's identified major student learner needs.*

### Areas of Strength

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Areas of Growth

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



## Category E: School Culture and Support for Student Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Growth

### Directions for Family/Guardian and Community Involvement

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the School Culture and Support criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how the ***family/guardian involvement impacts student learning and well-being.***

### Criterion E1: Family and Community Involvement

*The school leadership employs a wide range of culturally sensitive strategies and inclusive strategies to encourage family and community involvement, especially with the learning/teaching process.*

- **E1.1 Strategies and Processes:** School implements a range of culturally sensitive strategies and processes for ongoing family and community involvement in the learning and teaching process for all students.
- **E1.2 Inclusive Cultural Understanding:** School leadership values the cultures of students and adults through the learning opportunities and materials provided to develop an inclusive cultural understanding.
- **E1.3 Rapport and Trust:** School leadership develops rapport and trust with families and the community, valuing the identities of all individuals.

**Suggested evidence to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- Communication strategies with parents and community
- Parents and community resources available
- Strategies for involving non-English speaking parents
- Strategies and processes for supporting parents as active partners in the teaching/learning process
- Parent and community members involvement in the school's decision-making process
- School Site Council/ELAC (other parent groups) meeting agendas and minutes
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

## Directions for School Culture and Environment

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the School Culture and Support criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how the ***school culture and environment impact student learning and well-being***.

### Criterion E2: Culture and Environment

*The school leadership focuses on continuous school improvement by providing a nurturing learning environment and develops a culture that is characterized by trust, inclusivity, professionalism, and high expectations for all students.*

- **E2.1 Policies and Resources:** The policies, regulations, and resources ensure a nurturing learning environment for all students, including internet safety.
- **E2.2 Trust, Respect, and Equity:** The entire school community has an atmosphere of trust, respect, and equity in support of student achievement and well-being.
- **E2.3 School Culture:** Students experience a caring school culture that is conducive to learning, with high expectations for all and a learning environment that honors individual differences, and social emotional needs.

**Suggested evidence to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:**

- The existing policies and use of resources to ensure a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning
- The analysis of all aspects of the school with respect to safety and internet regulations
- The degree to which caring and high expectation for all student is demonstrated on a daily basis including policies on bullying
- The degree to which specific strategies demonstrate an atmosphere of trust, respect, and professionalism
- Ways that citizenship and ethical values and behaviors are demonstrated by students
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

## Directions for Multi-tiered Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Support

- Evaluate the school's effectiveness in addressing the School Culture and Support criteria and the supporting indicators.
- Analyze and explain how the evidence supports your findings and response.
- Explain how the **multi-tiered support systems impact student learning and well-being**.

## Criterion E3: Multi-tiered Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Support

*All students receive appropriate multi-tiered personal, social-emotional, and academic support to help ensure student learning, college and career readiness and success. Students with special talents and/or needs have access to an equitable system of personal support service, activities, and opportunities at school and in the community.*

- **E3.1 Multi-tiered Support:** School leadership implements and evaluates the effectiveness of personalized, academic multi-tiered support and alternative instructional approaches to meet student needs
- **E3.2 Student Involvement:** The school ensures a high level of student involvement in curricular and co-curricular activities that link to schoolwide student goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and college and career readiness.
- **E3.3 Student Self Advocacy:** Students deepen their sense of self and make personal and community connections that are meaningful and relevant and allow students to become advocates for their own needs and supports.

### Suggested evidence to gather, review, and analyze to determine the effectiveness in meeting the criterion:

- Strategies used by teachers and counselors to promote a more personalized approach to learning
- Alternative instructional options which provide additional student support
- The goals and the effectiveness of the school's integrated and designated EL program
- Review of how all students, including gifted, EL, special education, experience multi-tiered support
- Demographics and distribution of students through classes (includes gender, ethnicity, primary language, students with special needs) reflecting student diversity
- Evidence of availability of classes to all students, e.g., time and period schedules and the rationale for placement of courses on the schedule; the number and kinds of

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course offerings; alternative schedules available for repeat or accelerated classes (summer, class periods beyond the traditional school day)

- Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that connect and involve students
- Programs which connect students of different backgrounds to the school community and each other such as music, fine arts, clubs, forums, formal school activities
- Processes and procedures for assessing the effectiveness of support and interventions
- Review of effectiveness of counseling/advisory services, psychological, and health services
- Other pertinent evidence gathered through observations, interviews, and review of documentation.

## WASC Category E. School Culture and Support for Student, Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Growth Summary

*Prioritize and list the strengths and growth areas for the criteria and indicators in this category based on the school's identified major student learner needs.*

### Areas of Strength

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Areas of Growth

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



## Visit and Visit Follow-up Materials

As a school moves forward in the WASC/CDE continuous improvement process after the self-study, an accreditation visit by fellow educators takes place. The links below provide further information and templates that can be used by the visiting committee and the school. These materials along with other important information can be found in the School and Member Portals.

These materials reinforce the Coordinator Information and Guidelines: Visit (pp. 27–28)

- [Visiting Committee Chairperson Checklist](#)
- [Visiting Committee Member Checklist](#)
- [Visiting Committee Report Template](#)
- [WASC/CDE Accreditation Status Determination Worksheet](#)