

WASC OVERVIEW

The Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC), a world-renowned accrediting association in the United States, works closely with the Office of Overseas Schools under the U.S. Department of State.

The ACS WASC:

- Provides assistance to adult schools, works with associations in joint accreditation processes, and collaborates with California Department of Education (CDE).
- Is composed the Association of California School Administrators, California Department of Education, California School Boards Association, California Teachers Association, and California Federation of Teachers, among others representatives.

The WASC/CDE Focus on Learning (FOL) Joint Process Guide is the collaborative process that helps schools identify and implement school improvement needs and supports accountability.

Why Accreditation?

Assures a school community that the school's purposes are appropriate and being accomplished through a viable education program — a trustworthy institution for student learning:

- Validates the integrity of the school's program and transcripts
- Facilitates transfer of credits to other English-speaking schools — critical for college/university acceptance worldwide
- Fosters the ongoing improvement of the school's programs and operations to support student learning
- Provides valuable insight from fellow educators visiting the school
- Benefits schools that choose joint accreditation or other collaborative processes, e.g., ACS WASC/CDE.

WASC ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Initial Visit Process

The purpose of the visit team is to understand the school's purpose, its program, and operations based upon the ACS WASC criteria and detailed school description.

Self-Study Process/Full Visit

- Involvement of all stakeholders in the self-study process.
- Clarification of the school's purpose and the school-wide learner outcomes.
- Assessment of the student program and its impact on student learning with respect to the ACS WASC criteria.
- Development of a school-wide action plan that addresses identified areas for improvement.
- Validation and enhancement of visiting committees based on accreditation criteria and standards, self-study, and findings from the visit.

Follow-Up Process

- Annual assessment of the action plan progress and refinement of the plan.
- Completion of progress reports and/or reviews.
- Celebration of success.