



# **Commission on Independent Schools**

# **Manual for School Evaluation**

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2017 Edition

## **Commission on Independent Schools**

### **Mission Statement**

CIS engages member schools in a comprehensive peer review accreditation process that provides assurance of quality and serves as a catalyst for innovation, improvement and excellence.

We support the efforts of schools, with their diverse missions, to meet the current and emerging needs of their students and to achieve long-term institutional health.

As world leaders in accreditation with our partners at NEASC (founded in 1885), we promote an understanding of the changing educational landscape, and generate relevant discourse and action in the global educational community.

### **Core Principles**

Our schools benefit from our continuous and systematic peer review accreditation process, one that integrates both internal voice and external perspective. We hold our schools responsible for improving and transforming themselves, through self-study and reflection. The ultimate objective is for our schools to design a sustainable future, which is consistent with their respective missions in serving their students, and responsive to a rapidly changing environment.

*Approved by the Commission on Independent Schools, November 2013*

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# Manual for School Evaluation (2017 Edition)

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*Developed jointly by  
New England Association of Schools and Colleges  
and  
Connecticut Association of Independent Schools*



## INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1885, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. (NEASC) is the nation's oldest accrediting agency. NEASC accreditation is designed to give specific attention to each of the dual purposes of accreditation: quality assurance and school improvement.

The Commission established fifteen Standards of quality assurance that all schools must meet. Initial Accreditation of schools will be tabled until compliance is documented; member schools will be given one year to bring themselves into compliance with any Standard that is not met at the time of the visit.

Self-Study Part I: Reviewing the Standards asks the school to assess itself with regard to each Standard and rate its level of compliance. The Visiting Committee will independently assess the school's compliance and report on any difference in rating.

The Commission determined that the school should be asked to take the lead in setting goals for improvement and future directions; the Visiting Committee will add its perspective and recommendations with knowledge of the school's own plans.

Self-Study Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Future Discussion asks the school to reflect on the findings of Part I, make recommendations for itself that are action oriented, and identify issues for further discussion that will extend important conversations generated by the Self-Study.



# **The Phases of Accreditation**

## The Phases of Accreditation

Phase I: Self-Study		
	Preparation for the Self-Study	Self-Study Part I: Reviewing the Standards
<b>DATE</b>		
<b>PURPOSE</b>	Prior to beginning the Self-Study, the school must gather background information that will inform the discussion of the Self-Study Committees.	Part I of the Self-Study is focused on documenting the school's adherence to the Standards and to formulating recommendations for improvement.
<b>TASKS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED</b>	<p><u>The School will:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the mission statement.</li> <li>• Confirm that there is a current written description of the curriculum.</li> </ul> <p><u>Program Committees will:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review all major program areas with regard to the Program Standards (4, 5, and 6).</li> <li>• Write a brief report on each program area. (See Page 23)</li> </ul> <p><u>The Self-Study Coordinator will:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange to survey constituents.</li> <li>• Compile statistics.</li> <li>• Assemble documents.</li> <li>• Request financial information.</li> <li>• Arrange for financial review.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Each Standards Review Committee will:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review relevant background information (survey data, statistics, documents, and existing plans).</li> <li>• Review reports from program committees.</li> <li>• Review and comment on possible indicators and alternatives.</li> <li>• Identify issues for further inquiry.</li> <li>• Conduct research through focus groups, interviews, and observation.</li> <li>• Rate the degree of compliance with the Standard.</li> <li>• Draft a report documenting compliance with the Standard – or outlining specific steps and timeline to bring the school into compliance – and making recommendations related to the Standard that would enhance the students' experience and foster school improvement.</li> </ul>
<b>PROCESS STEPS</b>	<p>Appoint the Self-Study Coordinator(s) and Steering Committee.</p> <p>Select dates for visit.</p> <p>Establish calendar for the Self-Study.</p> <p>Coordinator attends Self-Study Workshop.</p> <p>Schedule NEASC staff presentation.</p> <p>Appoint committees for each major program area.</p> <p>Appoint committees for each Standard.</p>	<p>Present a draft of Part I of the Self-Study to the full faculty for discussion and comment and make final revisions.</p> <p>Assemble and upload to the portal all supplementary materials, including major program area reports and Indicator Checklists. (See Required Self-Study Documents and Materials in the <i>Manual for School Evaluation</i> for more details.)</p>

Phase I (continued)	Phases II and III
<p align="center"><b>Self-Study Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Visit and Follow-up</b></p>
<p>Part II of the Self-Study is devoted to reflection on the findings of the Self-Study Committees and to drawing together and prioritizing ideas for school improvement.</p>	<p>The charge to the Visiting Committee is to validate the Self-Study, make recommendations, and advise the Commission regarding accreditation.</p> <p>The school establishes follow-up process.</p>
<p><u>A representative Committee will:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review all sections of Part I of the Self-Study and compile all recommendations from the Committees.</li> <li>• Identify other (overarching) issues.</li> <li>• Prioritize goals.</li> <li>• Draft a one to three page report that draws together these ideas into a thoughtful, reflective, creative summary of the school’s most significant concerns, hopes, and dreams for the future. The report may include both action-oriented recommendations and issues for discussion. The report should distinguish immediate from long-range goals and comment on the implications for enhancing the students’ experience.</li> </ul>	<p><u>The Visiting Committee will:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the full Self-Study Report (Parts I and II).</li> <li>• Validate the Self-Study by interviewing people, observing the program, reviewing the supplementary materials.</li> <li>• Review the ratings for each of the Standards and assess the experience of students in that area.</li> <li>• Draft a report that confirms that Standards are met or describes plans that are in place (or make recommendations) to address them. Make recommendations to the school and the Commission regarding the Standards and Self-Study Report: Part II.</li> </ul>
<p>Form a Committee representative of all the Committees from Part I.</p> <p>Prepare draft of Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion, discuss the draft with the full faculty, and make final revisions.</p> <p>When the Self-Study Report is final in the portal, click MARK REPORT COMPLETE and save as a PDF for distribution to the school community. The Visiting Committee and the Commission will view the report in the portal. Printed copies are not necessary.</p> <p>Prepare to host the Visiting Committee.</p>	<p>The Visiting Committee submits its report to the Commission, with its ratings of the school on the individual Standards, and makes a recommendation on the accreditation status of the school.</p> <p>Immediately following the visit, the school should establish a follow-up procedure to track the process and progress of implementing recommendations from the Self-Study, the Visiting Committee, and the Commission.</p> <p>The Two-Year and Five-Year Interim Evaluation Reports are the normal times for the school to report to the Commission on its follow-up to the Self-Study and visit. The Two-Year Report will include a Multi-Year Plan.</p>



## Standards for Accreditation and Indicators

**Standard 1 (Mission):** There is congruence between the school's stated mission and core values and its actual program, policies, planning, and decision-making at both the operational and governance levels.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 1.a. The mission of the school is stated clearly.
- 1.b. The mission of the school is embraced by all constituencies and linked to all aspects of school operations.
- 1.c. The mission statement is reviewed regularly, using a process that involves representatives of major constituencies of the school, as appropriate.
- 1.d. The school community is engaged in reflecting on ways to enrich the application of the mission in all aspects of the program.
- 1.e. The school's climate and culture support an effective educational program, consistent with its stated mission.
- 1.f. Requirements and expectations of students, parents, faculty, trustees, and employees clearly reflect the values and mission of the school.
- 1.g. The culture of the school reflects a commitment to implementing the mission of the school.

**Standard 2 (Governance):** The school has an appropriate system of governance that assures that the school remains true to its mission and that it has the necessary resources to support its present and prospective operations.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 2.a. The governance of the school is clearly defined, understood by all constituents, and provides for:
  - continuity of mission
  - stability and ethical process in transitions of leadership
  - a comprehensive, multi-year planning process
  - assurance of adequate financial resources
  - institutional advancement/development
  - evaluation of and support of the professional growth of the Head of School
  - a model of inclusive behavior and integrity for the school community
  - establishing and monitoring needed school policies
  - self-evaluation of individuals and groups with governance responsibilities
  - defined orientation and evaluation procedures
- 2.b. The governing body demonstrates and clearly communicates its commitment to the mission.
- 2.c. Provision is made for participation of all constituencies in the policy-making process, as appropriate.
- 2.d. The school engages in multi-year planning.
- 2.e. There is an understood delegation of decision making that gives the Head of School the capacity to exercise effective educational leadership.

**Standard 3 (Enrollment):** The admissions process assures that those students who enroll are appropriate, given the school’s mission, and are likely to benefit from their experience at the school.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 3.a. The school in its public relations materials presents an accurate description of its mission, organization, staff, program, and facilities.
- 3.b. The mission of the school is reviewed with prospective families.
- 3.c. The school has clearly stated procedures for the admission of students, which are developmentally appropriate at different levels.
- 3.d. The school has developed a profile of its student body that defines the range and type of students suitable for admission.
- 3.e. If tuition assistance is offered, there are clearly stated policies and procedures for the application for and award of grants which are consistent with the mission of the school.
- 3.f. The school uses information concerning the performance of students and graduates in evaluating admissions procedures.
- 3.g. The school undertakes an analysis of the reasons students depart prior to graduation and uses the results to inform admissions procedures and program revisions.
- 3.h. Those responsible for admissions communicate with those responsible for the program of the school to assure that necessary resources are available to meet the needs of individual students who are admitted.
- 3.i. The admissions staff communicates regularly with the teaching faculty about the specific talents/strengths/skills/needs of newly enrolled students.

**Standard 4 (Program):** The school provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that is appropriate to support the school’s mission and core values, and is consistent with the needs of the range of students admitted. Program planning is informed by relevant research regarding how students learn and the knowledge and capacities they will need to lead purposeful and constructive lives.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 4.a. Professional development time is used for faculty to research, study, and discuss issues of teaching and learning and the capacities students will need to develop.
- 4.b. The school’s program demonstrates consideration for the appropriate intellectual, social, physical, aesthetic, emotional and ethical development of students in all aspects of school and student life.
- 4.c. The curriculum demonstrates continuity from year to year.
- 4.d. The school has a policy for regularly reviewing the academic program and has completed a recent, written curriculum plan outlining desirable and/or necessary improvements.
- 4.e. Attention is paid to transitions between grade levels and/or divisions of the school so as to facilitate passage of students from one level/division to another.
- 4.f. The program offers a variety of cultural experiences to reflect (a) the diversity of students enrolled and (b) the multicultural nature of the region, country, and world.
- 4.g. The school recognizes developmental levels of children and takes them into consideration in planning the program and teaching methodologies.
- 4.h. The school evaluates the academic rigor, effectiveness, and integrity of online courses that its students take and of any online courses that the school itself offers, on a regular basis.

**Standard 5 (Experience of the Students):** The school actively considers individual students and has developed plans, policies, programs, and pedagogy to nurture, support, and encourage all students to reach their potential and to participate in the life of the school.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 5.a. The school recognizes differences within the student body such as gender, learning style or ability, race, age, ethnicity, family background, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, and religious practice, and actively responds to students' and adults' positive or negative experiences.
- 5.b. Time is made available on a regular basis for teachers to plan together and to discuss students (both individuals and groups).
- 5.c. Time is made available on a regular basis for teachers to learn ways in which their backgrounds help and/or hinder their ability to work with students, parents, and other adults in the community.
- 5.d. There is a procedure in place to assess and report on how individual students are meeting the goals of the program with regard to both personal and academic growth.
- 5.e. There is a process in place to see how the school's program needs to change to reflect the diversity of cultural experiences and to identify adults and/or students who will need additional support to function effectively in a pluralistic environment.
- 5.f. Resources are available to faculty (in-school or through outside consultants) to assist in identifying and meeting the needs of individual students.
- 5.g. There is a process in place to identify students who might benefit from a modification of the program.
- 5.h. There is a process in place to identify students for whom the school is inappropriate and a supportive process for counseling those students.
- 5.i. Counseling, advising, and guidance procedures and personnel address the needs of the students.
- 5.j. College or school placement counseling, as applicable, addresses the needs of the students.
- 5.k. Information is systematically gathered regarding students' experience at the school and is used to inform program planning.
- 5.l. The school promotes an equitable, just, and inclusive community that inspires students to respect and value diversity and to be active and responsible citizens, and has ways to insure that this objective is met.
- 5.m. The school assures that, if students take or the school offers online courses, the design and delivery of the online courses meet the needs of the students and support student-to-student and student-to-faculty interactions.

**Standard 6 (Resources to Support the Program):** Given the school’s mission, there are adequate resources (space, equipment, technology, materials, and community) to support the school’s program.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 6.a. Instructional facilities (including space, furnishings, and play/recreation areas) are adequate for the instructional program and are age appropriate.
- 6.b. There are instructional materials and equipment in sufficient quality, quantity, and variety to give effective support to the aims and methods of the program.
- 6.c. The school has a library plan which is integrated with the curriculum and which provides students with age appropriate experiences in research and reading and supports the broad purposes of the educational program.
- 6.d. The school has an academic technology plan, developed by teachers and academic leaders, covering the integration of technology into the various components of the program and providing for the professional development of teachers in the implementation of this plan.
- 6.e. The school has in place an acceptable use policy of which students and families are informed, and the school provides information to students and families on the appropriate and ethical use of technology.
- 6.f. There are procedures in place to assure that teachers have a leading role in planning the use of technology in their teaching.
- 6.g. Non-academic programs, if available, are consistent with the school’s mission and are well organized, supplied, and staffed.
- 6.h. The schedule is planned by day and year to provide for the total program.
- 6.i. The school interacts with the community in which it is located and avails itself of community resources.
- 6.j. The school strives to be a positive member of the community in which it exists, is sensitive to the interests of its neighbors, and takes appropriate advantage of the character of its setting.
- 6.k. The financial aid resources committed to students and their families reflect the goals and mission of the school.
- 6.l. The school has sufficient resources to support any online courses it does offer.

**Standard 7 (Early Childhood Program\*):** The Early Childhood Program enriches the social and intellectual development of its students by providing comprehensive programs and appropriate staffing, resources and facilities.

\*For NEASC accreditation, Early Childhood is defined as three-year and four-year old children. NEASC does not accredit Early Childhood Programs that serve children under the age of three. However, if schools enroll children younger than three years old, they must provide documentation attesting that those programs meet health and safety regulations/guidelines as required in your state.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 7.a. Materials, routines, and procedures are organized to ensure the health and safety of young children.
- 7.b. The school communicates and collaborates with parents of children in a manner addressing the needs of this community.
- 7.c. Staff who work directly with children in the Early Childhood Program are trained in the field of early childhood education/child development. Their numbers are sufficient in relation to numbers and ages of children in each early childhood grouping to perform tasks effectively and safely.
- 7.d. The school has curricular and extra-curricular programs in place which specifically and effectively address intellectual and developmental needs of children in the Early Childhood Program and are consistent with the school's stated mission.
- 7.e. Facilities provided for the Early Childhood Program, including instructional, activity and play spaces, and supporting resources such as lavatories and dining areas, are adequate in construction, space provided per child, and maintenance to meet the needs of the children in the program.
- 7.f. Those sections of the Early Childhood Program that serve children under the age of three meet health and safety regulations/guidelines as required in your state.

**Standard 8 (Residential Program and/or Homestay Program):** The Residential Program and/or Homestay Program provide for an intentional curriculum, appropriate facilities, engaging activities, and adequate supervision to meet the needs of each student.

*Suggested Indicators (Residential Program):*

- 8.a. The Residential Program is consistent with the mission of the school.
- 8.b. Residential staff are qualified to meet the needs of students under their care and supervision.
- 8.c. The Residential Program is integrated into the total life of the school, especially with regard to the interaction with day students.
- 8.d. Evening, weekend, and vacation activities are actively planned, as part of the residential curriculum, to meet the needs of the students.
- 8.e. The school provides for the needs of international students, students with limited financial resources, and students who have difficulty adjusting to being away from home.
- 8.f. If technological services, such as computers, Internet access, email, and/or telephones, are included in residential areas, there is a process to ensure that policies and procedures are consistent with the school's overall technology plan and acceptable use policy.
- 8.g. Through a well-defined process involving students, parents, and staff, a regular review of the Residential Program is accomplished which is intended to lead to revisions and/or improvements.
- 8.h. There are clearly-stated, written, and understood expectations for residential students and staff.
- 8.i. Students are included in planning and developing policies, expectations, and programs.

*(continued on the next page)*

*Suggested Indicators (Homestay Program):*

- 8.j. The Homestay Program is consistent with the mission of the school.
- 8.k. The school has a formal contract with homestay families if there is a direct placement or with an agency that provides homestay placements.
- 8.l. The school assures that homestay facilities are safe and clean, and provide sufficient living space.
- 8.m. There is a clearly defined process in place to screen host families, including a background check, and a process for matching student and family interests.
- 8.n. There is a procedure to include host families and students in defining and understanding the ethical and legal responsibilities of the school, host families, and students.
- 8.o. The school has clearly-stated, written, and understood expectations for the school, host families, and students regarding the student academic program and experiences both during the school week and on weekends and vacations, and these expectations and responsibilities are published and disseminated in a school handbook.
- 8.p. The school has a well-defined process, which includes students and host families, to regularly review the Homestay Program and the experience of the students for the purpose of improvement.
- 8.q. The school has procedures in place to integrate international and other students living in homestay situations into the school's social and academic fabric.

**Standard 9 (Faculty):** There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified faculty to carry out the mission of the school and the school follows a comprehensive and defined program of professional development that supports continued enhancement of teachers' skills.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 9.a. The school has a procedure for recruiting professional staff who are the best available for the tasks to be performed and for the mission of the school, and also has a procedure for screening and interviewing candidates and providing them with necessary background information about the school.
- 9.b. Academic personnel are qualified by education, training, or experience in the areas to which they are assigned.
- 9.c. Academic personnel are regularly trained in the areas of skills, content, and the context of a multicultural society.
- 9.d. The school has a shared understanding of teaching excellence.
- 9.e. The school has a defined program for the evaluation and supervision of teachers.
- 9.f. Personnel practices provide ethical treatment among all faculty, administration, and staff with respect to compensation, workloads, and working conditions.
- 9.g. The school demonstrates a commitment to staff development by providing opportunity for and expecting participation in professional growth and development.
- 9.h. The faculty are treated with respect and the school sets clear expectations for their professional behavior.
- 9.i. If the school offers online courses, faculty responsible for providing these courses are appropriately qualified, trained, supported, and evaluated.

**Standard 10 (Administration):** The administration provides leadership and maintains a structure to facilitate the effective functioning of the school, including the participation of faculty in decision-making.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 10.a. The administration is effective in carrying out the program of the school and the policies established by the governing body or school board.
- 10.b. Administrative personnel and support staff are qualified by education, training or experience to serve in the areas to which they are assigned.
- 10.c. The administration assures review and evaluation of the educational program and provides that a current curriculum plan is in place.
- 10.d. The administration involves faculty in decision-making about the program of the school.
- 10.e. The school demonstrates a commitment to administrator development by providing opportunity for and expecting participation in professional growth and development.
- 10.f. The school has a defined program for the evaluation and supervision of administrators.

**Standard 11 (Evaluation and Assessment):** The school engages in forms of programmatic assessment consistent with fulfilling its mission and core values. This data is used to inform decision-making and planning.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 11.a. The school conducts annual program review and revision based on assessment of student performance.
- 11.b. The school uses some form of longitudinal assessment of student performance (such as portfolio assessment).
- 11.c. The school conducts exit interviews of students and faculty and uses the data to inform admissions and program planning.
- 11.d. The school has procedures to follow-up on the experiences of alumni/ae and uses the data to inform admissions and program planning.
- 11.e. The school brings in consultants and/or visitors from other schools to participate in the periodic evaluation of programs.
- 11.f. The vitality/influence of the mission in the life of the school is assessed.
- 11.g. The school participates in state sponsored learning results activities, as appropriate.
- 11.h. The school carries out programs for supervision and evaluation of all personnel that are understood by all concerned.
- 11.i. Those responsible for leadership engage in periodic self-evaluation of their performance.
- 11.j. The school develops and publishes a policy and plan on diversity and difference, derived from its mission and core values, that it uses to evaluate the status of the school in this regard and to guide planning to achieve goals.
- 11.k. If applicable, the school's plans for developing, sustaining, and expanding online courses are integrated into the overall planning and evaluation procedures of the school.

**Standard 12 (Health and Safety):** The school is a safe place that supports the physical, emotional and cognitive health and development of all students, faculty and staff.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 12.a. The school's culture and climate, policies and procedures, rooted in inclusivity and empathy, honor the dignity of every person in their community.
- 12.b. Students affirm they are supported in the development of relationships (student to student and student to faculty) based in trust and mutual respect.
- 12.c. The school has appropriate services and personnel to support the emotional, social and psychological needs of the students.
- 12.d. The school thoroughly and regularly educates and trains all personnel in the legal requirements of mandatory reporting, appropriate emotional and physical boundaries and healthy relationships.
- 12.e. The school hires personnel using thorough and consistent practices, including background checks and personal references.
- 12.f. The school's policy for written professional references respects both the integrity of author and subject and the necessity for honesty and candor.
- 12.g. The physical facilities and staffing for healthcare appropriately address the needs of the student body, whether residential or day.
- 12.h. Facilities and staff for food services are adequate and the quality of the food meets reasonable nutritional requirements.
- 12.i. The school's Crisis Response Plan is comprehensive, understood and practiced by faculty, staff, students and, where appropriate, parents.
- 12.j. The school continually audits and validates the systems, facilities and practices that insure the safety of the school community.
- 12.k. There is a person or committee with responsibility for reviewing safety provisions for on-campus and off-campus activities, including field trips, athletic events, wilderness expeditions, etc.
- 12.l. The school requires appropriate adult-student supervision during school hours and all school-sponsored student activities and programs.
- 12.m. The school has a reporting procedure in place to document and follow-up on any incidents regarding health and safety of students and staff.

**Standard 13 (Communication):** The school maintains effective systems of external and internal communication and record keeping that inform all constituents and facilitate participation where appropriate.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 13.a. The school maintains complete and accurate records for both current and former students that are protected against loss by fire or theft and are available only to authorized persons.
- 13.b. The school publishes current school policies and procedures in handbooks or makes them readily available in other forms to the affected constituencies, and effectively implements the policies as published.
- 13.c. The school has a mechanism in place for input from staff into decision-making regarding personnel policies, budget preparation, and other areas, as appropriate.
- 13.d. Information regarding the financial responsibilities of the parent/guardian or student to the institution is clearly stated in writing and is made available prior to enrollment.
- 13.e. There is a procedure for determining equitable adjustments in tuition and other financial obligations existing between the parent/guardian and the institution.
- 13.f. Appropriate channels are available for parents to reflect their concerns and interests to school personnel.
- 13.g. Student progress is reported regularly to parents in a clear and comprehensive manner.
- 13.h. The school structures ways to work with parents/guardians proactively. The school is aware of the ways in which families from diverse backgrounds and socio-economic status are affected by school policies and programs.
- 13.i. The school maintains complete and accurate records for staff and faculty members that are available only to authorized persons and are protected against loss by fire, theft, or technological failure.
- 13.j. There is an internal communication system to distribute minutes of meetings, give notice of decisions, and inform the school community of events and other news.

**Standard 14 (Infrastructure):** There are adequate resources (personnel, finances, facilities, equipment, and materials) to provide for the overall institutional needs of the school.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 14.a. The school has appropriate procedures for accounting and for auditing the accounts of the school.
- 14.b. The school has adequate financial resources for the needs of the school.
- 14.c. The school has adequate provision for insurance coverage.
- 14.d. The physical facilities of the school are appropriately maintained.
- 14.e. There is a recent facilities plan covering future needs, improvements, and additions.
- 14.f. The school has a clear picture of its long and short-term development needs and the plans, organization, and staffing to meet those needs.
- 14.g. The school has an institutional technology plan that provides for the coordination of academic and administrative functions, defines the technological services available, projects needs and directions, and describes the management system.

**Standard 15 (The Accreditation Process):** The school is fully committed to institutional improvement and to the process of accreditation. The school completed an inclusive Self-Study, conducted in a spirit of full disclosure and following Association guidelines; responds to Commission recommendations and the requirement to meet all standards; and participates fully in the peer review process, hosting a Visiting Committee and sending personnel to serve on Visiting Committees to other institutions.

*Suggested Indicators:*

- 15.a. The school has completed a thorough Self-Study in accordance with NEASC policies, including Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion.
- 15.b. Administration, professional staff and those with governance responsibilities have actively participated in and are familiar with the Self-Study and its findings.
- 15.c. The school has in place a procedure for follow-up on plans and strategies found in its own Self-Study and on recommendations in the Visiting Committee Report and to integrate improvement plans resulting from the Self-Study into the school's Multi-Year Plan.
- 15.d. The school participates in the Association's peer based accreditation process and is represented on Visiting Committees to other schools.

## **Guidelines for the Self-Study**

The Self-Study is an exercise in thoughtful reflection, analysis and strategic planning. It presupposes work done in advance that provides background information. The Self-Study should be inclusive of all faculty and should engage others as the school deems appropriate. The Self-Study Report consists of two parts: (1) review and documentation of compliance with the NEASC Standards and (2) reflection, formulation of recommendations, and identifying issues for further discussion in response to the findings of the Self-Study Committees.

### **Preparation for the Self-Study**

Prior to beginning the Self-Study the school must gather background information that will inform the work of the committees, as follows:

1. **The Mission.** The school should review the existing mission statement through an inclusive process and revise as needed.
2. **The Curriculum.** The school must have in place a description of the curriculum in a format appropriate to the school. At the minimum, the curriculum needs to address issues of continuity and coherence, serve as a basis for curriculum discussion and development, provide guidance for new teachers, and present information for prospective families.
3. **Reflection on Major Programs.** Committees, including a range of perspectives, should be formed to examine each major program area (subject areas, departments, and core non-academic programs) and write a brief report commenting on:
  - a. The contribution to the mission of the school
  - b. The consistency of activities with the school's beliefs about teaching and learning
  - c. Planned continuity across grade levels
  - d. Coordination with the school's stated curriculum plan
  - e. Appropriateness of offerings for the full range of the student body
  - f. Pedagogical methods used
  - g. Contribution of the area to achieving the school's goals for students and students' goals for themselves
  - h. Adequacy of available resources
  - i. Professional development opportunities provided
  - j. Strengths/weaknesses and areas in need of improvement

These reports will be uploaded to the portal as part of Standard 4. They will provide the basis for the school's overall response to Standards 4, 5, and 6 in the Self-Study Report.

4. **Surveys.** Schools will survey parents, faculty, and students. Secondary grades will also survey alumni/ae. The school may design its own surveys, but should include questions based on the survey questions suggested by NEASC. The results should be summarized, given to all Self-Study Committees, and included in the supplementary materials for the Visiting Committee.

5. **Statistics.** The school will compile statistics on admissions and on student performance.
6. **Documents.** The school will gather together existing policy documents, plans, and handbooks.
7. **Finances.** The school will prepare historical information (for at least two prior years) on school finances and will schedule a financial review or audit by an independent accountant or arrange for an approved alternative report on finances.

### **Self-Study School Data Sheet**

The school must complete the School Data Sheet, which includes writing a brief introduction to the Self-Study that provides a narrative description of the history, mission, and culture of the school. This is intended to give an introduction to the school, to the Visiting Committee, and to the Commission when they review the Self-Study Report. Parts of it may be copied and included in the Visiting Committee Report.

### **Self-Study Part I: Reviewing the Standards**

Each Standard must be addressed separately in the Self-Study Report (see page 58 for a Part I sample template page). The school should appoint a number of Self-Study Committees, each responsible for one or more Standards. The Self-Study Committee(s) for the overall Program Standards (4, 5, and 6) will include representatives from all major program areas. The committees should proceed as follows:

1. Gather and review relevant information from program committee reports, surveys, handbooks, policy manuals, compilations of data, etc.
2. Discuss the Standard and suggested indicators, identify other possible indicators relevant to the school, assess compliance with the Standard, and identify questions to be asked and people to be interviewed.
3. Interview individuals and convene groups to discuss the school's compliance with the Standard and to explore further actions that the school might take in this regard.
4. Draft the section of the Self-Study Report for the Standard. It should include five elements:
  - a. A narrative description of the school's position with regard to the Standard
  - b. A description of the process followed by the committee in inquiring into the Standard, committee membership, and meeting dates
  - c. Documentation that the Standard is met or a detailed explanation of proposed steps to bring the school into compliance, the resources available, and the timetable for this to be accomplished
  - d. Rating of the school on the degree to which it meets the Standard
  - e. Recommendations for ways in which the school might strengthen itself in regard to the Standard

## **Self-Study Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion**

An assignment as comprehensive and self-reflective as the preparation of Part I of the Self-Study will generate a variety of future oriented questions, concerns, ideas, recommendations, and commitments from those who participate in drafting it and those who review it before submission to NEASC. Part II of the Self-Study (see page 59 for the template sample) asks the school to draw together and prioritize these ideas into a thoughtful, reflective, creative summary of the school's most significant concerns, hopes and dreams for the future.

Part II of the Self-Study is intended to be a macro-look at major findings, presented in a one to three page report. The school may present its findings in any of several formats:

- As recommendations that are *self-identified* and are action-oriented
- As issues for further discussion in which the goal is to extend important conversations generated by the Self-Study
- As a combination of both action items and discussion items

Key elements to discuss within the report are:

- Report of major findings and conclusions
- Prioritization of the findings with explanation
- Specific action items for any Standard(s) on which the school rates itself as SU1 or SU2 (see note below)
- Overview of implementation strategies to address the conclusions, including:
  - Part II committee membership
  - Meeting schedule
  - Timeline
  - Any specific procedures

Part II of the Self-Study, once completed, becomes a central resource for future planning at the school. Quite often, it will evolve nicely into the school's next Multi-Year Strategic Plan. In the short run, it is a vital resource to the school's advancement team.

Note on unmet Standards: Specific action items must be presented in Part II for any Standard on which the school rates itself as SU1 or SU2. A Special Progress Report followed by a staff visit will be assigned to be due within one year.

## Assessment of Standards

Standards should be assessed through the lens of student experience. The fundamental test is whether or not students are supported. When a Standard is “Met,” student experience is reasonably whole, positive and creative. When it is “Unmet,” students are – or may be – adversely affected. While some Standards have more direct or immediate student effects, every Standard ultimately makes itself felt in the lives of a school’s students.

SM1: Standard Met: evidences clear understanding, effective implementation and thorough planning for further improvement.

SM2: Standard Met: evidences understanding, evolving implementation and planning for improvement.

SU1: Standard Unmet: evidences inadequate understanding, implementation and planning for remediation that may foreseeably compromise student experience.

SU2: Standard Unmet: lacks understanding, implementation and planning for remediation, thereby compromising student experience.

During the Self-Study, schools rate themselves on every Standard.

During its visit, the Visiting Committee also rates the school on every Standard. When the Committee’s ratings differ from the school’s rating, the Committee will explain its conclusions.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Met</b> <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Unmet</b> <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>
SM1. Standard Met: evidences clear understanding, effective implementation and thorough planning for further improvement.	SU1. Standard Unmet: evidences inadequate understanding, implementation and planning for remediation that may foreseeably compromise student experience.
SM2. Standard Met: evidences understanding, evolving implementation and planning for improvement.	SU2. Standard Unmet: lacks understanding, implementation and planning for remediation, thereby compromising student experience.

## **Review and Edit**

The school might consider asking an outside reader (an alumnus/a, trustee, retired teacher, parent or other knowledgeable person who was not actively involved in the Self-Study) to review the final draft for clarity and completeness.

## **Letter from Head of School & Completion of Self-Study 4-6 Weeks Prior to the Visit Date**

At least one month before the visit, the school will complete the Self-Study Report in the portal. Documents such as the staff list, daily program schedule (including teacher assignments to tentatively schedule classroom visits and interviews), and directions to the school and hotel may be attached in the portal. The Head of School's welcome letter to the team may be emailed and copied to the Commission at [cis@neasc.org](mailto:cis@neasc.org). An optional hard copy confidential letter to the Chair, with financial or sensitive information, should **only** be sent to the Chair and the Commission office.

## SCHOOL DATA SHEET

*(Note: Your completed School Data Sheet  
may be copied and included with the Visiting Committee Report.)*

**School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Founding:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Enrollment (at the time of evaluation visit):** \_\_\_\_\_

	PS	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	PG	Totals
<b>Male</b>																
<b>Female</b>																
<b>Day</b>																
<b>Boarding</b>																
<b>Homestay</b>																

**International students included in the above table who are not U.S. residents:**

<b>Day</b>																
<b>Boarding</b>																
<b>Homestay</b>																

**Number of Faculty:** \_\_\_\_\_ full-time; \_\_\_\_\_ part-time

**Number of Administrators:** \_\_\_\_\_ full-time; \_\_\_\_\_ part-time

**Brief statement of school's history, mission, and culture – what makes this school unique?**

Person(s) completing this form: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Faculty Preference Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The concrete task of the Self-Study is to produce a report which examines how well our school meets the Standards of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and how we might improve our school.

All faculty and professional staff will need to participate in and support the production of this report. In the process, we will look at what we say we do and how well we actually do it. We will also identify and make recommendations for improvement.

We will complete our Self-Study in **three stages**:

### Stage One – Preparation for the Self-Study

All faculty members will participate in the review of the school’s major programs. Our “programs” include all academic departments, major extracurricular programs, sports, community service, and so on.

You will be assigned to a Program Committee, probably outside of your subject area. If you particularly yearn to know more about the math department or athletic department (or anything else), please indicate (and rank) your preferences here:

_____	_____
_____	_____

### Stage Two – Self-Study Part I: Reviewing the Standards

In addition, each faculty and staff member will serve on at least one other committee, responsible for writing a section of the self-evaluation report addressing one or more of the NEASC Standards. Please indicate below, with a “1,” “2,” and “3” your committee preferences.

\_\_\_\_\_ Standard 1 (Mission): There is congruence between the school’s stated mission and core values and its actual program, policies, planning, and decision-making at both the operational and governance levels.

\_\_\_\_\_ Standard 2 (Governance): The school has an appropriate system of governance that assures that the school remains true to its mission and that it has the necessary resources to support its present and prospective operations.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard 3 (Enrollment): The admissions process assures that those students who enroll are appropriate, given the school’s mission, and are likely to benefit from their experience at the school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard 4 (Program): The school provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that is appropriate to support the school’s mission and core values, and is consistent with the needs of the range of students admitted. Program planning is informed by relevant research regarding how students learn and the knowledge and capacities they will need to lead purposeful and constructive lives.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard 5 (Experience of the Students): The school actively considers individual students and has developed plans, policies, programs, and pedagogy to nurture, support, and encourage all students to reach their potential and to participate in the life of the school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard 6 (Resources to Support the Program): Given the school’s mission, there are adequate resources (space, equipment, technology, materials, and community) to support the school’s program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard 7 (Early Childhood Program): The Early Childhood Program enriches the social and intellectual development of its students by providing comprehensive programs and appropriate staffing, resources and facilities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard 8 (Residential Program and/or Homestay Program): The Residential Program and/or Homestay Program provide for an intentional curriculum, appropriate facilities, engaging activities, and adequate supervision to meet the needs of each student.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard 9 (Faculty): There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified faculty to carry out the mission of the school and the school follows a comprehensive and defined program of professional development that supports continued enhancement of teachers’ skills.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard 10 (Administration): The administration provides leadership and maintains a structure to facilitate the effective functioning of the school, including the participation of faculty in decision-making.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard 11 (Evaluation and Assessment): The school engages in forms of programmatic assessment consistent with fulfilling its mission and core values. This data is used to inform decision-making and planning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard 12 (Health and Safety): The school is a safe place that supports the physical, emotional and cognitive health and development of all students, faculty and staff.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard 13 (Communication): The school maintains effective systems of external and internal communication and record keeping that inform all constituents and facilitate participation where appropriate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Standard 14 (Infrastructure): There are adequate resources (personnel, finances, facilities, equipment, and materials) to provide for the overall institutional needs of the school.

\_\_\_\_\_ Standard 15 (The Accreditation Process): The school is fully committed to institutional improvement and to the process of accreditation. The school completed an inclusive Self-Study, conducted in a spirit of full disclosure and following Association guidelines; responds to Commission recommendations and the requirement to meet all Standards; and participates fully in the peer review process, hosting a Visiting Committee and sending personnel to serve on Visiting Committees to other institutions.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have no committee preference. Please make use of me by assigning me to any of these options. I am pleased to help make our school a better place!

### **Stage Three – Self-Study Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion**

When we have completed our examination of the school’s compliance with the NEASC Standards, a representative committee will be appointed to reflect on what we have learned, formulate recommendations for school improvement, and identify issues for further discussion.

Please check this box to indicate you would be interested in serving on the committee to reflect on our findings, draft recommendations, and identify issues for further discussion.

Please check this box to indicate you would be willing to help edit and proofread the final report. (NOTE: You still need to indicate committee choices in Stage Two, above.)

Thank you so much for your enthusiasm and care in filling out this form. Let me know if you have questions or second thoughts about your choices. You will receive your committee assignments and a calendar for the Self-Study at the faculty meeting on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Self-Study Coordinator

## Suggested Calendar for Self Study

### Initial Steps (Complete the semester before starting the Self-Study):

- Contact Commission office to arrange for a staff member to meet with faculty
- Obtain necessary materials – order or download from <http://cis.neasc.org>
- Determine Self-Study Coordinator(s)
- Organize Steering Committee
- Attend Self-Study Workshop
- Establish calendar including necessary professional days for accreditation work
- Confirm (or draft) a written description of the curriculum in a form appropriate to the school
- Review mission statement with faculty and Board

### Preparation for the Self-Study

Fall Visit	Spring Visit	
August/September	December/January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty presentation by CIS staff person</li> <li>• Appoint program committees for all departments and other major programs.</li> <li>• Survey faculty for interest in Self-Study committees</li> </ul>
September/October	January/February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey parents, faculty, and students</li> <li>• Compile survey results for Self-Study committees</li> <li>• Assemble policy documents, existing plans, and handbooks for Self-Study committees</li> <li>• Gather statistics on enrollment (admissions and attrition) and student performance</li> <li>• Include all of the above in the supplementary materials</li> </ul>
September – November	January – March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene program committees for all departments and other major programs. Each committee should write a brief report about their area, as outlined on Page 23, and make recommendations for ways in which the program might be strengthened. These reports will be given to the Self-Study committees and will be made available to the Visiting Committee.</li> <li>• Arrange for necessary financial reports and information.</li> </ul>

## Self-Study Part I: Reviewing the Standards

Fall Visit	Spring Visit	
December – February	March – June, September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint and convene Self-Study committees for all standards.</li> <li>• Each committee should review background information, complete relevant Indicator Checklist, identify issues for further inquiry, and assign research and interviews.</li> <li>• Each committee drafts a report on the school’s position with regard to the Standard for which they are responsible – documenting compliance or outlining plans to come into compliance.</li> <li>• Each committee drafts recommendations related to the standard that would enhance the students’ experience and foster school improvement.</li> </ul>
March – April	October – November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All committees share their draft reports and recommendations with the entire faculty for comment and make appropriate revisions.</li> </ul>

*Note:* A smaller school may consider taking 18 months to complete the Self-Study by using one whole semester for the Program review, and two school semesters for the Standards review.

## Self-Study Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion

Fall Visit	Spring Visit	
April – May	December – January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene a representative group to review, compile, and reflect on findings and recommendations from all Self-Study committees.</li> <li>• Draft Self-Study Report Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion.</li> </ul>
May – June	February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share the draft Part II with the entire faculty for comment and make appropriate revisions.</li> </ul>

### Prepare for Visiting Committee

- Reserve hotel rooms as soon as the date for the visit is set.
- Invite Chair of Visiting Committee for a pre-visit to the school when his/her name is received.
- Gather and organize supplementary materials as the Self-Study proceeds.
- Consider inviting an outside reader to review and comment on the final draft.
- Complete Self-Study Report and attach supporting documents in the portal one month before visit, as directed in the Required Self-Study Documents and Materials.



## **Budget for the Self-Study and Visit**

The cost of the Self-Study will depend on how the school organizes the work. A large or complex school may find it necessary to grant a course reduction to the Self-Study Coordinator or to hire someone familiar with the school to assume this role. If there is extensive editing to be done, this may call for additional compensation. Administrative work may or may not fit into the regular schedule of school staff.

The school may estimate its expenses for the Visiting Committee fairly accurately once the size of the team is known. The primary expenses are three nights lodging with a private room and bath for each committee member, a meeting room at the hotel, meals from Sunday dinner through Wednesday lunch, and travel expenses of committee members. The school is also responsible for the expenses of the Visiting Committee Chair for a pre-visit.

The Commission requires an independent accountant's review with management letter, an audit, or an approved alternative report of finances at the time of the visit and again with the Five-Year Interim Evaluation Report. The expense for this requirement should be anticipated.

## **INDICATOR CHECKLISTS**

These checklists are to be used in the Self-Study process.

All Self-Study Committees will complete the relevant Indicator Checklist as part of their discussion on how to document compliance of the school with a given Standard. These completed checklists will be included in the supplementary materials for review by the Visiting Committee.

**NOTE:** Schools must complete the Indicator Checklists, but are **NOT** required to comply with all indicators. The Commission feels that they represent good practices and encourages schools to meet them. However, schools are welcome to submit other data and narrative information to document their compliance with the Standards for Accreditation.

**Standard 1 (Mission):** There is congruence between the school’s stated mission and core values and its actual program, policies, planning, and decision-making at both the operational and governance levels.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 1 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.a.	The mission of the school is stated clearly.		
1.b.	The mission of the school is embraced by all constituencies and linked to all aspects of school operations.		
1.c.	The mission statement is reviewed regularly, using a process that involves representatives of major constituencies of the school, as appropriate.		
1.d.	The school community is engaged in reflecting on ways to enrich the application of the mission in all aspects of the program.		
1.e.	The school’s climate and culture support an effective educational program, consistent with its stated mission.		
1.f.	Requirements and expectations of students, parents, faculty, trustees, and employees clearly reflect the values and mission of the school.		
1.g.	The culture of the school reflects a commitment to implementing the mission of the school.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 2 (Governance):** The school has an appropriate system of governance that assures that the school remains true to its mission and that it has the necessary resources to support its present and prospective operations.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 2 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
2.a.	The governance of the school is clearly defined, understood by all constituents, and provides for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continuity of mission</li> <li>• stability and ethical process in transitions of leadership</li> <li>• a comprehensive, multi-year planning process</li> <li>• assurance of adequate financial resources</li> <li>• institutional advancement/development</li> <li>• evaluation of and support of the professional growth of the Head of School</li> <li>• a model of inclusive behavior and integrity for the school community</li> <li>• establishing and monitoring needed school policies</li> <li>• self-evaluation of individuals and groups with governance responsibilities</li> <li>• defined orientation and evaluation procedures</li> </ul>		
2.b.	The governing body demonstrates and clearly communicates its commitment to the mission.		
2.c.	Provision is made for participation of all constituencies in the policy-making process, as appropriate.		
2.d.	The school engages in multi-year planning.		
2.e.	There is an understood delegation of decision making that gives the Head of School the capacity to exercise effective educational leadership.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 3 (Enrollment):** The admissions process assures that those students who enroll are appropriate, given the school’s mission, and are likely to benefit from their experience at the school.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 3 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
3.a.	The school in its public relations materials presents an accurate description of its mission, organization, staff, program, and facilities.		
3.b.	The mission of the school is reviewed with prospective families.		
3.c.	The school has clearly stated procedures for the admission of students, which are developmentally appropriate at different levels.		
3.d.	The school has developed a profile of its student body that defines the range and type of students suitable for admission.		
3.e.	If tuition assistance is offered, there are clearly stated policies and procedures for the application for and award of grants which are consistent with the mission of the school.		
3.f.	The school uses information concerning the performance of students and graduates in evaluating admissions procedures.		
3.g.	The school undertakes an analysis of the reasons students depart prior to graduation and uses the results to inform admissions procedures and program revisions.		
3.h.	Those responsible for admissions communicate with those responsible for the program of the school to assure that necessary resources are available to meet the needs of individual students who are admitted.		
3.i.	The admissions staff communicates regularly with the teaching faculty about the specific talents/strengths/skills/needs of newly enrolled students.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 4 (Program):** The school provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that is appropriate to support the school’s mission and core values, and is consistent with the needs of the range of students admitted. Program planning is informed by relevant research regarding how students learn and the knowledge and capacities they will need to lead purposeful and constructive lives.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 4 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
4.a.	Professional development time is used for faculty to research, study, and discuss issues of teaching and learning and the capacities students will need to develop.		
4.b.	The school’s program demonstrates consideration for the appropriate intellectual, social, physical, aesthetic, emotional and ethical development of students in all aspects of school and student life.		
4.c.	The curriculum demonstrates continuity from year to year.		
4.d.	The school has a policy for regularly reviewing the academic program and has completed a recent, written curriculum plan outlining desirable and/or necessary improvements.		
4.e.	Attention is paid to transitions between grade levels and/or divisions of the school so as to facilitate passage of students from one level/division to another.		
4.f.	The program offers a variety of cultural experiences to reflect (a) the diversity of students enrolled and (b) the multicultural nature of the region, country, and world.		
4.g.	The school recognizes developmental levels of children and takes them into consideration in planning the program and teaching methodologies.		
4.h.	The school evaluates the academic rigor, effectiveness, and integrity of online courses that its students take and of any online courses that the school itself offers, on a regular basis.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 5 (Experience of the Students):** The school actively considers individual students and has developed plans, policies, programs, and pedagogy to nurture, support, and encourage all students to reach their potential and to participate in the life of the school.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 5 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
5.a.	The school recognizes differences within the student body such as gender, learning style or ability, race, age, ethnicity, family background, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, and religious practice, and actively responds to students’ and adults’ positive or negative experiences.		
5.b.	Time is made available on a regular basis for teachers to plan together and to discuss students (both individuals and groups).		
5.c.	Time is made available on a regular basis for teachers to learn ways in which their backgrounds help and/or hinder their ability to work with students, parents, and other adults in the community.		
5.d.	There is a procedure in place to assess and report on how individual students are meeting the goals of the program with regard to both personal and academic growth.		
5.e.	There is a process in place to see how the school’s program needs to change to reflect the diversity of cultural experiences and to identify adults and/or students who will need additional support to function effectively in a pluralistic environment.		
5.f.	Resources are available to faculty (in-school or through outside consultants) to assist in identifying and meeting the needs of individual students.		

*(table continued on the next page)*

### Standard 5 (continued)

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
5.g.	There is a process in place to identify students who might benefit from a modification of the program.		
5.h.	There is a process in place to identify students for whom the school is inappropriate and a supportive process for counseling those students.		
5.i.	Counseling, advising, and guidance procedures and personnel address the needs of the students.		
5.j.	College or school placement counseling, as applicable, addresses the needs of the students.		
5.k.	Information is systematically gathered regarding students' experience at the school and is used to inform program planning.		
5.l.	The school promotes an equitable, just, and inclusive community that inspires students to respect and value diversity and to be active and responsible citizens, and has ways to insure that this objective is met.		
5.m.	The school assures that, if students take or the school offers online courses, the design and delivery of the online courses meet the needs of the students and support student-to-student and student-to-faculty interactions.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 6 (Resources to Support the Program):** Given the school’s mission, there are adequate resources (space, equipment, technology, materials, and community) to support the school’s program.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 6 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
6.a.	Instructional facilities (including space, furnishings, and play/recreation areas) are adequate for the instructional program and are age appropriate.		
6.b.	There are instructional materials and equipment in sufficient quality, quantity, and variety to give effective support to the aims and methods of the program.		
6.c.	The school has a library plan which is integrated with the curriculum and which provides students with age appropriate experiences in research and reading and supports the broad purposes of the educational program.		
6.d.	The school has an academic technology plan, developed by teachers and academic leaders, covering the integration of technology into the various components of the program and providing for the professional development of teachers in the implementation of this plan.		
6.e.	The school has in place an acceptable use policy of which students and families are informed, and the school provides information to students and families on the appropriate and ethical use of technology.		
6.f.	There are procedures in place to assure that teachers have a leading role in planning the use of technology in their teaching.		
6.g.	Non-academic programs, if available, are consistent with the school’s mission and are well organized, supplied, and staffed.		

*(table continued on the next page)*

**Standard 6 (continued)**

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
6.h.	The schedule is planned by day and year to provide for the total program.		
6.i.	The school interacts with the community in which it is located and avails itself of community resources.		
6.j.	The school strives to be a positive member of the community in which it exists, is sensitive to the interests of its neighbors, and takes appropriate advantage of the character of its setting.		
6.k.	The financial aid resources committed to students and their families reflect the goals and mission of the school.		
6.l.	The school has sufficient resources to support any online courses it does offer.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 7 (Early Childhood Program\*):** The Early Childhood Program enriches the social and intellectual development of its students by providing comprehensive programs and appropriate staffing, resources and facilities.

\*For NEASC accreditation, Early Childhood is defined as three-year and four-year old children. NEASC does not accredit Early Childhood Programs that serve children under the age of three. However, if schools enroll children younger than three years old, they must provide documentation attesting that those programs meet health and safety regulations/guidelines as required in your state.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 7 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
7.a.	Materials, routines, and procedures are organized to ensure the health and safety of young children.		
7.b.	The School communicates and collaborates with parents of children in a manner addressing the needs of this community.		
7.c.	Staff who work directly with children in the Early Childhood Program are trained in the field of early childhood education/child development. Their numbers are sufficient in relation to numbers and ages of children in each early childhood grouping to perform tasks effectively and safely.		
7.d.	The school has curricular and extra-curricular programs in place which specifically and effectively address intellectual and developmental needs of children in the Early Childhood Program and are consistent with the school’s stated mission.		
7.e.	Facilities provided for the Early Childhood Program, including instructional, activity and play spaces, and supporting resources such as lavatories and dining areas, are adequate in construction, space provided per child, and maintenance to meet the needs of the children in the program.		
7.f.	Those sections of the Early Childhood Program that serve children under the age of three meet health and safety regulations/guidelines as required in your state.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 8 (Residential Program and/or Homestay Program):** The Residential Program and/or Homestay Program provide for an intentional curriculum, appropriate facilities, engaging activities, and adequate supervision to meet the needs of each student.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 8 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

**Standard 8: Residential Program Indicators**

	<b>Suggested Indicators (Residential Program)</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
8.a.	The Residential Program is consistent with the mission of the school.		
8.b.	Residential staff are qualified to meet the needs of students under their care and supervision.		
8.c.	The Residential Program is integrated into the total life of the school, especially with regard to the interaction with day students.		
8.d.	Evening, weekend, and vacation activities are actively planned, as part of the residential curriculum, to meet the needs of the students.		
8.e.	The school provides for the needs of international students, students with limited financial resources, and students who have difficulty adjusting to being away from home.		
8.f.	If technological services, such as computers, Internet access, email, and/or telephones, are included in residential areas, there is a process to ensure that policies and procedures are consistent with the school’s overall technology plan and acceptable use policy.		
8.g.	Through a well-defined process involving students, parents, and staff, a regular review of the Residential Program is accomplished which is intended to lead to revisions and/or improvements.		
8.h.	There are clearly-stated, written, and understood expectations for residential students and staff.		
8.i.	Students are included in planning and developing policies, expectations, and programs.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

### Standard 8: Homestay Program Indicators

	<b>Suggested Indicators (Homestay Program)</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
8.j.	The Homestay Program is consistent with the mission of the school.		
8.k.	The school has a formal contract with homestay families if there is a direct placement or with an agency that provides homestay placements.		
8.l.	The school assures that homestay facilities are safe and clean, and provide sufficient living space.		
8.m.	There is a clearly defined process in place to screen host families, including a background check, and a process for matching student and family interests.		
8.n.	There is a procedure to include host families and students in defining and understanding the ethical and legal responsibilities of the school, host families, and students.		
8.o.	The school has clearly-stated, written, and understood expectations for the school, host families, and students regarding the student academic program and experiences both during the school week and on weekends and vacations, and these expectations and responsibilities are published and disseminated in a school handbook.		
8.p.	The school has a well-defined process, which includes students and host families, to regularly review the Homestay Program and the experience of the students for the purpose of improvement.		
8.q.	The school has procedures in place to integrate international and other students living in homestay situations into the school's social and academic fabric.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 9 (Faculty):** There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified faculty to carry out the mission of the school and the school follows a comprehensive and defined program of professional development that supports continued enhancement of teachers’ skills.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 9 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
9.a.	The school has a procedure for recruiting professional staff who are the best available for the tasks to be performed and for the mission of the school, and also has a procedure for screening and interviewing candidates and providing them with necessary background information about the school.		
9.b.	Academic personnel are qualified by education, training, or experience in the areas to which they are assigned.		
9.c.	Academic personnel are regularly trained in the areas of skills, content, and the context of a multicultural society.		
9.d.	The school has a shared understanding of teaching excellence.		
9.e.	The school has a defined program for the evaluation and supervision of teachers.		
9.f.	Personnel practices provide ethical treatment among all faculty, administration, and staff with respect to compensation, workloads, and working conditions.		
9.g.	The school demonstrates a commitment to staff development by providing opportunity for and expecting participation in professional growth and development.		
9.h.	The faculty are treated with respect and the school sets clear expectations for their professional behavior.		
9.i.	If the school offers online courses, faculty responsible for providing these courses are appropriately qualified, trained, supported, and evaluated.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 10 (Administration):** The administration provides leadership and maintains a structure to facilitate the effective functioning of the school, including the participation of faculty in decision-making.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 10 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
10.a.	The administration is effective in carrying out the program of the school and the policies established by the governing body or school board.		
10.b.	Administrative personnel and support staff are qualified by education, training or experience to serve in the areas to which they are assigned.		
10.c.	The administration assures review and evaluation of the educational program and provides that a current curriculum plan is in place.		
10.d.	The administration involves faculty in decision-making about the program of the school.		
10.e.	The school demonstrates a commitment to administrator development by providing opportunity for and expecting participation in professional growth and development.		
10.f.	The school has a defined program for the evaluation and supervision of administrators.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 11 (Evaluation and Assessment):** The school engages in forms of programmatic assessment consistent with fulfilling its mission and core values. This data is used to inform decision-making and planning.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 11 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
11.a.	The school conducts annual program review and revision based on assessment of student performance.		
11.b.	The school uses some form of longitudinal assessment of student performance (such as portfolio assessment).		
11.c.	The school conducts exit interviews of students and faculty and uses the data to inform admissions and program planning.		
11.d.	The school has procedures to follow-up on the experiences of alumni/ae and uses the data to inform admissions and program planning.		
11.e.	The school brings in consultants and/or visitors from other schools to participate in the periodic evaluation of programs.		
11.f.	The vitality/influence of the mission in the life of the school is assessed.		
11.g.	The school participates in state sponsored learning results activities, as appropriate.		
11.h.	The school carries out programs for supervision and evaluation of all personnel that are understood by all concerned.		
11.i.	Those responsible for leadership engage in periodic self-evaluation of their performance.		
11.j.	The school develops and publishes a policy and plan on diversity and difference, derived from its mission and core values, that it uses to evaluate the status of the school in this regard and to guide planning to achieve goals.		

*(table continued on the next page)*

**Standard 11 (continued)**

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
11.k.	If applicable, the school's plans for developing, sustaining, and expanding online courses are integrated into the overall planning and evaluation procedures of the school.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 12 (Health and Safety):** The school is a safe place that supports the physical, emotional and cognitive health and development of all students, faculty and staff.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 12 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
12.a.	The school’s culture and climate, policies and procedures, rooted in inclusivity and empathy, honor the dignity of every person in their community.		
12.b	Students affirm they are supported in the development of relationships (student to student and student to faculty) based in trust and mutual respect.		
12.c.	The school has appropriate services and personnel to support the emotional, social and psychological needs of the students.		
12.d.	The school thoroughly and regularly educates and trains all personnel in the legal requirements of mandatory reporting, appropriate emotional and physical boundaries and healthy relationships.		
12.e.	The school hires personnel using thorough and consistent practices, including background checks and personal references.		
12.f.	The school’s policy for written professional references respects both the integrity of author and subject and the necessity for honesty and candor.		
12.g.	The physical facilities and staffing for healthcare appropriately address the needs of the student body, whether residential or day.		
12.h.	Facilities and staff for food services are adequate and the quality of the food meets reasonable nutritional requirements.		
12.i.	The school’s Crisis Response Plan is comprehensive, understood and practiced by faculty, staff, students and, where appropriate, parents.		
12.j.	The school continually audits and validates the systems, facilities and practices that insure the safety of the school community.		

*(table continued on the next page)*

**Standard 12 (continued)**

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
12.k.	There is a person or committee with responsibility for reviewing safety provisions for on-campus and off-campus activities, including field trips, athletic events, wilderness expeditions, etc.		
12.l.	The school requires appropriate adult-student supervision during school hours and all school-sponsored student activities and programs.		
12.m.	The school has a reporting procedure in place to document and follow-up on any incidents regarding health and safety of students and staff.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 13 (Communication):** The school maintains effective systems of external and internal communication and record keeping that inform all constituents and facilitate participation where appropriate.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 13 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
13.a.	The school maintains complete and accurate records for both current and former students that are protected against loss by fire or theft and are available only to authorized persons.		
13.b.	The school publishes current school policies and procedures in handbooks or makes them readily available in other forms to the affected constituencies, and effectively implements the policies as published.		
13.c.	The school has a mechanism in place for input from staff into decision-making regarding personnel policies, budget preparation, and other areas, as appropriate.		
13.d.	Information regarding the financial responsibilities of the parent/guardian or student to the institution is clearly stated in writing and is made available prior to enrollment.		
13.e.	There is a procedure for determining equitable adjustments in tuition and other financial obligations existing between the parent/guardian and the institution.		
13.f.	Appropriate channels are available for parents to reflect their concerns and interests to school personnel.		
13.g.	Student progress is reported regularly to parents in a clear and comprehensive manner.		
13.h.	The school structures ways to work with parents/guardians proactively. The school is aware of the ways in which families from diverse backgrounds and socio-economic status are affected by school policies and programs.		

*(table continued on the next page)*

**Standard 13 (continued)**

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
13.i.	The school maintains complete and accurate records for staff and faculty members that are available only to authorized persons and are protected against loss by fire, theft, or technological failure.		
13.j.	There is an internal communication system to distribute minutes of meetings, give notice of decisions, and inform the school community of events and other news.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 14 (Infrastructure):** There are adequate resources (personnel, finances, facilities, equipment, and materials) to provide for the overall institutional needs of the school.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 14 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
14.a.	The school has appropriate procedures for accounting and for auditing the accounts of the school.		
14.b.	The school has adequate financial resources for the needs of the school.		
14.c.	The school has adequate provision for insurance coverage.		
14.d.	The physical facilities of the school are appropriately maintained.		
14.e.	There is a recent facilities plan covering future needs, improvements, and additions.		
14.f.	The school has a clear picture of its long and short-term development needs and the plans, organization, and staffing to meet those needs.		
14.g.	The school has an institutional technology plan that provides for the coordination of academic and administrative functions, defines the technological services available, projects needs and directions, and describes the management system.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

**Standard 15 (The Accreditation Process):** The school is fully committed to institutional improvement and to the process of accreditation. The school completed an inclusive Self-Study, conducted in a spirit of full disclosure and following Association guidelines; responds to Commission recommendations and the requirement to meet all Standards; and participates fully in the peer review process, hosting a Visiting Committee and sending personnel to serve on Visiting Committees to other institutions.

The Self-Study Committee for Standard 15 should complete this form. Review each suggested indicator, assess whether the school meets this indicator (“Yes” or “No”), and add any comments explaining the school’s position and any plans regarding the indicator.

	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>	<b>School Meets (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
15.a.	The school has completed a thorough Self-Study in accordance with NEASC policies, including Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion.		
15.b.	Administration, professional staff and those with governance responsibilities have actively participated in and are familiar with the Self-Study and its findings.		
15.c.	The school has in place a procedure for follow-up on plans and strategies found in its own Self-Study and on recommendations in the Visiting Committee Report and to integrate improvement plans resulting from the Self-Study into the school’s Multi-Year Plan.		
15.d.	The school participates in the Association’s peer based accreditation process and is represented on Visiting Committees to other schools.		
	Other Indicators the school proposes.		

# SAMPLE PAGE

## Self-Study Report Template, Part I

SAMPLE PAGE – Self-Study Report Template, Part I

**Standard 4 (Program):** The school provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that is appropriate to support the school’s mission and core values, and is consistent with the needs of the range of students admitted. Program planning is informed by relevant research regarding how students learn and the knowledge and capacities they will need to lead purposeful and constructive lives.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Met</b> <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Unmet</b> <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>
SM1. Standard Met: evidences clear understanding, effective implementation and thorough planning for further improvement.	SU1. Standard Unmet: evidences inadequate understanding, implementation and planning for remediation that may foreseeably compromise student experience.
SM2. Standard Met: evidences understanding, evolving implementation and planning for improvement.	SU2. Standard Unmet: lacks understanding, implementation and planning for remediation, thereby compromising student experience.

School’s Self-Assessment \_\_\_\_\_

Brief narrative description of the school’s position with regard to this Standard  
(This summary may be copied and used in the Visiting Committee Report.)

Self-Study Committee membership, meeting schedule, and procedures

List of background materials reviewed and people interviewed:

- \_\_\_ Parent survey
- \_\_\_ Faculty survey
- \_\_\_ Student survey
- \_\_\_ Alumni/ae survey
- \_\_\_ Department and major program reports
- \_\_\_ Publications (list)
- \_\_\_ Other (list)

Comments regarding suggested indicators  
(Indicator Checklists with comments should be included in the supplementary materials)

Comments regarding alternative indicators proposed by the school

Notable strengths of the school in this area

Notable weaknesses/needs

Aspects warranting attention

Recommendations for school improvement and issues for further discussion

# SAMPLE PAGE

## Self-Study Report Template, Part II

### **Self-Study Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion**

This section asks the school to explore and determine the most significant findings and conclusions uncovered in Part I, to define and characterize them thoughtfully, to explain how they will be prioritized, and finally to explain the implementation of responses to them.

In addition, please present specific action items for any Standard on which the school rates itself as SU1 or SU2.

The school may present its findings in a one to three page report, using any format appropriate to the school. (See Guidelines for the Self-Study in the *Manual for School Evaluation* for more details.)

The key elements are:

- Report of major findings and conclusions
- Prioritization of the findings with explanation
- Specific action items for any Standard(s) on which the school rates itself as SU1 or SU2
- Overview of implementation strategies to address the conclusions, including:
  - Part II committee membership
  - Meeting schedule
  - Timeline
  - Any specific procedures

SAMPLE PAGE – Self-Study Report Template, Part II

## **SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRES**

In the preparatory phase of the Self-Study, all schools are to survey parents, faculty, and students on issues covered by the Standards. Secondary grades should also survey alumni/ae.

The results of these surveys should be compiled and given to the Self-Study committees as background information to inform their discussions.

The attached questionnaires are samples which can be customized to each school. Schools may use these as is, add questions to those that are suggested, or design their own form. The suggested questions relate to Standards and are sufficiently similar to allow comparisons of responses across constituencies. Online survey forms such as SurveyMonkey ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)) may be used.

The completed questionnaires, together with the compilation of results, should be included in the supplementary materials for review by the Visiting Committee.

**SAMPLE  
Parent Questionnaire**

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A*
1	The school's mission is clear and well communicated.					
2	The mission matches what is actually happening in the program and the school does what it says it does.					
3	The admission process is effective in enrolling students who are appropriate and likely to benefit from their experience at the school as the school defines itself.					
4	The school provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that serves the interests of my child.					
5	The school offers a variety of experiences to reflect the diversity of the students enrolled and the multicultural nature of society itself.					
6	The school actively takes into consideration the individual needs, learning styles, and characteristics of students by providing developmentally appropriate programs and activities to help students achieve their potential.					
7	The teachers provide a positive learning experience for my child.					
8	Throughout my child's experience at the school, he/she has found thoughtful and skilled faculty.					
9	Policies are administered fairly and reflect the core values of the school.					
10	The methods used to assess my child's work at the school are clear, fair, and helpful.					
11	The school is a safe, clean, well-organized place that nurtures learning and mutual respect among students and teachers.					
12	The school has an effective system of communicating important information to the parents.					
13	My input is welcome and sought after.					
14	The school has sufficient resources to meet the needs of my child.					
15	This is a great school for my child.					

\*N/A = *Not applicable or no opinion*

**Please complete separate questionnaires if you have several children attending.**

(See sample second page of questionnaire on page 65)

**SAMPLE  
Faculty Questionnaire**

		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>N/A*</b>
1	The school's mission is matched by what is actually happening in the program and the school does what it says it does.					
2	The admission process is effective in enrolling students who are appropriate and likely to benefit from their experience at the school.					
3	The program that the school offers is sufficiently broad to meet the needs of all students.					
4	The school encourages me to shape my program to include a variety of experiences which reflect the diversity of the students enrolled and the multicultural nature of society itself.					
5	In my teaching I take into consideration the individual needs, learning styles and characteristics of students by providing developmentally appropriate programs and activities to help students achieve their potential.					
6	As a faculty member I feel that I am treated with respect.					
7	I am given opportunities for professional development.					
8	Policies are administered fairly and reflect the core values of the school.					
9	I am given an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.					
10	Faculty evaluation at the school is clear, fair, and helpful to me.					
11	The school is a safe, clean, well-organized place that nurtures learning and mutual respect among students and teachers.					
12	The school maintains internal communication in an effective manner.					
13	The school provides sufficient resources for me, as a teacher, to meet the needs of students.					

*\*N/A = Not applicable or no opinion*

(See sample second page of questionnaire on page 65)

**SAMPLE  
Student Questionnaire**

		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>N/A*</b>
1	The school's mission is clear and well publicized.					
2	The school's mission is matched by what is actually happening in the program and the school does what it says it does.					
3	The admission process is effective in enrolling students who are appropriate and likely to benefit from their experience at the school.					
4	The school provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that meets my needs.					
5	The school engages me in a variety of experiences that reflect the diversity of the student body and the multicultural nature of society.					
6	The school actively takes into consideration my individual needs, learning style, and characteristics by providing developmentally appropriate programs and activities to help me achieve my potential.					
7	There are faculty to whom I can turn for advice both in academic and personal issues.					
8	Discipline and other policies are applied fairly and reflect the core values of the school.					
9	The methods used to assess my work at the school are clear, fair, and helpful.					
10	I feel safe.					
11	The school is a safe, clean, well-organized place that nurtures learning and mutual respect among students and teachers.					
12	The school has an effective system of communicating important information to the students.					
13	The school has sufficient resources to meet my needs.					

*\*N/A = Not applicable or no opinion*

(See sample second page of questionnaire on page 65)

**SAMPLE  
Alumni/ae Questionnaire**

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A*
<b>Mission</b>						
1	The school's mission and values stay with me today.					
2	The school's mission was matched by what actually happened in the program and the school did what it said it did.					
3	The admission process was effective in enrolling students who were appropriate and likely to benefit from their experience at the school as it defined itself.					
<b>Program</b>						
4	When I left school, I was well prepared for success in my next endeavor.					
5	The school provided a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that met my needs.					
6	The school engaged me in a variety of experiences that reflected the diversity of the student body and the multicultural nature of society.					
7	The school actively took into consideration my individual needs, learning style, and characteristics by providing developmentally appropriate programs and activities to help me achieve my potential.					
8	The school had sufficient resources to meet my needs.					
<b>Faculty</b>						
9	The faculty were great.					
10	The faculty were well suited to deliver the program as defined by the school.					
11	There were faculty to whom I could turn for advice both in academic and personal issues.					
12	The methods used to assess my work at the school were clear, fair, and helpful.					
<b>Culture/Climate</b>						
13	It was a great place to go to school.					
14	Discipline and other policies were applied fairly and reflect the core values of the school.					
15	The school was a safe, clean, well-organized place that nurtured learning and mutual respect among students and teachers.					
<b>Secondary School/College Preparedness</b>						
16	I was appropriately placed in secondary school/college.					
17	I was well prepared for each of my courses freshman year.					
18	I was well prepared for the social life of secondary school/college.					
19	I was well prepared for my further pursuits in athletics and/or the arts.					
20	The school stays in touch with me now that I have left, and remains a resource going forward.					

\*N/A = Not applicable or no opinion

(See sample second page of questionnaire on page 65)

**SAMPLE**  
**Second Page for all Questionnaires**

The school's strengths are:

The school's areas for improvement are:

Comments:

Thank you for your time and input.

## Multi-Year Planning

When a school seeks accreditation with NEASC it is committing itself to engage in an ongoing process of self-assessment, goal setting, and planning. The Self-Study, culminating in Part II: Reflections, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion, is designed to be an example of this approach to school improvement.

Schools may choose not to create formal “plans,” but they need to approach planning in an organized manner. All planning should be based on the mission of the school, together with any purposes, objectives, and goals specific to various components of the school’s programs.

At the time of the Two-Year Interim Evaluation Report, the Commission will ask schools to present evidence of Multi-Year Planning that incorporates all of the major recommendations from the Self-Study and Visiting Committee Reports that have not yet been accomplished.

Some areas for regular planning pursued by many schools include:

### 1. Enrollment

The school should maintain (and update) enrollment projections for at least the next five years; components of this projection should include: grade level, gender, and where appropriate, separate numbers for students who will qualify for financial aid, children of employees who may receive tuition remission, and students who may be involved in special programs. All enrollment data should be aligned with projected tuition and fee levels over time in order to show projected net income from this area. Desired levels of financial aid should be included in this plan.

If enrollments are expected to change, either by increasing or declining, the school should be able to adjust staffing, facilities, curriculum and other program components; these changes, driven by enrollment fluctuations, should inform other planning.

### 2. Curriculum

Based on the mission, grade levels, and enrollment of the school, what should the curriculum contain? In order to have students learn what is expected of them, what courses, staffing, facilities, time, technology, and materials are required to meet the needs of all learners?

### 3. Academic Technology

Teachers and the academic leadership should plan the appropriate integration of technology into the various components of the program; determine the necessary skill levels of students and teachers to reach the desired utilization; and project the hardware, software, infrastructure, maintenance, and management aspects of technology. All the goals and information derived from the academic technology planning should be incorporated in overall technology planning.

### 4. Library

Depending on the type and scope of the school’s library or media center, it is important to articulate the purposes, objectives, and goals of this resource and plan for the needs for staff, facilities, related technology, print materials and periodicals, and curriculum.

## **5. Diversity**

The school's efforts to support difference and multiculturalism might be facilitated by identifying the specific needs of various students and planning how best to provide: special or augmented programs for certain students or groups; the education of students about issues of equity and justice; the professional development of faculty, including various relevant topics in the general curriculum; and awareness by all constituencies of the complexities of how differing cultural and learning backgrounds affect the school's environment and its ability to meet its mission.

## **6. Institutional Technology**

Given the scale of expense and the pace of change in the area of technology, a school may want to develop a more formal plan for institutional technology that provides for the appropriate services and systems to integrate technology into the curriculum and also supports the coordination of academic, administrative, and institutional functions. At the very least, the school should recognize the need for ongoing planning to address the future development or changes to all network and infrastructure components.

## **7. Facilities**

Given the mission and corresponding program at the school, do the facilities meet the needs of that program? Facilities planning might involve an audit of the current facilities including their history, use, age, condition, and future needs in term of expansion, renovation, or maintenance. Any additional or new facilities might be planned using this background information.

## **8. Financial**

All of the planning described herein will have financial ramifications and this information must be integrated into a financial plan. Financial plans and projected cash flows should be updated periodically so as to avoid surprises when unforeseen enrollment shifts take place. The financial plan also helps determine what the short- and long-term development needs are so that planning can be accomplished in that area as well.

## **9. Development**

As the general needs of the school, especially in financial terms, are developed through careful consideration of program needs and fulfilling the mission of the school, development or fund-raising considerations come into play. Planning is essential to successfully raising funds.

## **REQUIRED SELF-STUDY DOCUMENTS AND MATERIALS**

### **Self-Study Report and Documents**

Your Self-Study Report, including the Review of Major Programs (uploaded in Standard 4) should be completed in the portal at least one month before the visit. Please click the MARK REPORT COMPLETE button when it is finalized in the portal. The Visiting Committee will access your report via the portal.

### **Regulatory Compliance Documentation**

**The Chair of the Visiting Committee for the evaluated school is required to attest to the existence of the following documentation which may be uploaded in the portal under “Legal/Regulatory Documentation and/or made available for the Chair’s pre-visit to the school:**

1. Corporate status as a tax-exempt institution, if applicable
2. Non-discriminatory admissions and employment policies
3. Information regarding the financial responsibilities of parents and students
4. Fire Marshal’s inspection certificate or letter stating at time of the last inspection, all requirements were met
5. Health inspection certificates for food services
6. Statement from the Head of School that the school’s Emergency Plan is complete and has been submitted to the local police department
7. Documentation attesting that those sections of the Early Childhood Program that serve children under the age of three meet health and safety regulations/guidelines as required in your state

### **Vermont Schools Only**

#### **Additional Regulatory Compliance Documentation for Vermont Schools:**

- The school’s harassment, hazing, and bullying prevention policies and procedures
- The school’s Discipline Plan
- The school’s Rule 4500-compliant policy for the use of restraint and seclusion
- The school’s user’s agreement with the Vermont Crime Information Center and any related criminal records requests.
- The school’s Concussion Action Plan
- The school’s Immunization Plan
- The school’s Emergency Preparedness Plan
- *(For Independent Residential Schools only)* A copy of the school’s annual fire safety inspection by the Department of Public Safety or its designee

The Vermont Statutes and State Board Rules may be found at:

<http://education.vermont.gov/state-board-councils/state-board/rules>

## **Supplementary Materials**

1. The Head of School's welcome letter to Visiting Committee Members. This should be emailed to the Chair, Visiting Committee Members, and the CIS office at [cis@neasc.org](mailto:cis@neasc.org).
2. Directions to your school and the hotel (*attach in Portal under Additional Uploaded Files*)
3. Alphabetical Staff Overview (*attach in Portal under Additional Uploaded Files*)
4. Daily program schedule including teacher assignments to tentatively schedule classroom visits and interviews (*attach in Portal under Additional Uploaded Files*)

## **Hard Copy Materials**

**Hard copies of the following materials should be mailed only to the Chair of the Visiting Committee (one copy) and the Director of the Commission (two copies):**

1. The current operating budget and most recent year-to-date report
2. The operating statement for the most recently completed year: compare budgeted figures and actual experience
3. A review or opinion level audit or approved alternative, e.g., Diocesan Report on School Finances
4. A Salary table for full-time teaching faculty, high and low
5. List of benefits
6. Optional: Head of School's confidential letter with any financial or sensitive information should **only** be sent to the Chair and the CIS office at [cis@neasc.org](mailto:cis@neasc.org).

**The following materials may be uploaded in the portal within the relevant Standard and/or copies may be available in the Visiting Committee's workroom where appropriate:**

1. Indicator Checklists for all Standards
2. Parent, faculty, student, and alumni/ae questionnaires, as applicable, together with compilation and summary of findings
3. Forms used in the evaluation of professional staff
4. A description of the curriculum in a form appropriate to the school
5. Written bylaws describing the school's governance structure
6. Admissions and recruiting materials, including brochures and catalogs
7. Information regarding financial responsibilities which is given to parents prior to enrollment, including any enrollment contracts
8. All current planning documents (see Multi-Year Planning)
9. Student, faculty, and parent handbooks
10. Calendar for the school year
11. Sample copies of publications
12. Sample copies of forms used to collect or record information about students
13. Sample copies of forms used to collect data from former students
14. Profile of student body as shown by aptitude and/or achievement testing (Provide samples of tests)

*(Revised June 2017)*

## The Visiting Committee Process

**Selection of Chair and Pre-Visit Outline:** The Commission staff will consult with the Head of School in identifying the Chair of the Visiting Committee and determining the size of the Committee and any special areas of focus. Once the Chair of the Visiting Committee has been confirmed, the Head of School should invite the Chair to the school for a meeting to go over arrangements and the schedule for the full visit. The Chair will identify meetings which should be scheduled during the full visit and those people who should be available.

Additionally, the Chair will take this opportunity to check in with the Self-Study Coordinators to get a sense of the school's progress on the Self-Study. At this time, inquiry about any stumbling blocks is appropriate. It is particularly important that the Chair confirm at the time of the pre-visit that major regulatory documents are in place, and that there will be a certified financial audit available during the full visit. Taking initiative now will help the process to unfold successfully.

**Appointment of the Visiting Committee:** The selection of the Visiting Committee is the responsibility of the Commission staff.

**Scheduling the Visit:** Visiting Committees are scheduled to arrive on a Sunday afternoon and depart on the following Wednesday afternoon. The school, in consultation with the Commission staff, should select the dates for the visit well ahead of time to facilitate planning. Fall visits are scheduled from the last week in September to the first week in November, and spring visits from the last week in March through the end of April.

**Accommodations:** The school is responsible for arranging housing for all Committee Members for three nights. Accommodations should be in a local hotel or motel and provide a private room and bath for each member. In addition, the school should arrange for a meeting room for the Committee at the hotel.

**Meals:** The school is responsible for meals. Details of the schedule should be worked out with the Visiting Committee Chair, but, ordinarily, the Committee will have lunches provided in their workroom at the school. If breakfast is not available at the hotel, it may also be provided at school. Most committees prefer to have working dinners on Monday and Tuesday, either at the hotel or a local restaurant. On Sunday the school customarily holds a reception for faculty and other members of the school community and hosts a dinner for the Committee and a few select members of the school community. The Committee has a great deal of work to accomplish in a short time and, therefore, social events and entertainment should be kept to a minimum and scheduled only in consultation with the Chair. The school is expected to make the Committee comfortable but should avoid extravagant expense.

**Arrangements at the School:** The Visiting Committee must have a private meeting room at the school which is for their use only during the visit. Refreshments should be provided during the days of the visit. The Visiting Committee Chair will discuss needed arrangements for access to computers.

**What to Expect from the Visiting Committee:** The Committee will access and review the Self-Study from the portal prior to their arrival. Their charge is to understand the school on its own terms, assess the accuracy of the Self-Study Report, determine compliance with the Standards for Accreditation, review Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion,

write a report that includes commendations and recommendations, and make a recommendation to the Commission regarding accreditation.

The school should expect Visiting Committee Members to be at the school all day on Monday and Tuesday and some members may be at the school on Wednesday morning. While the presence of the visitors will obviously not go unnoticed, the school is asked to maintain as normal a routine as possible. Committee Members will interview faculty, administration, parents, students, and Board Members. They will try to talk individually with all faculty and staff. A Committee Member responsible for reviewing a particular section of the Self-Study Report may seek out those who participated in drafting that section.

Members of the Committee will visit classes in order to gain a flavor of the academic program. Teachers should not schedule tests, field trips, or films during these three days. The visitors will be observing interactions among students and between students and faculty. They will note teaching methods and instructional materials. Faculty should expect visitors to come for parts of classes. The Visiting Committee is looking at the entire program; they will not evaluate individual faculty, staff, or administrators and will not comment on the performance of any individual, or identify them by name in the Visiting Committee Report.

The Committee departs on Wednesday after they have completed a draft of their report. The Committee is instructed not to share specifics of their report, however, since it has not been finalized. The Chair and another member of the Committee will meet with the Head of School and one or two people on Wednesday afternoon to review major areas of comment in the report. Committee Chairs are encouraged not to hold a meeting with the entire faculty, but rather to finalize the Committee's report and submit it to the school at the earliest possible time so that everyone may read the whole and, therefore, view any recommendations in context. Factual errors are to be corrected before the final report is submitted to the Commission. Upon receipt of the final report, the Head of School is invited to write a reaction to the Visiting Committee Report.

### **Commission Action**

The Commission will review the school's Self-Study, the Visiting Committee Report, the Visiting Committee's recommendation concerning accreditation and votes on Standards for Accreditation, and the school's reaction letter (if applicable) at its next meeting after all these items are received. Commission meetings are usually held in February, June, and November.

If a school recommended for initial membership does not meet all the Standards, action on their accreditation will be tabled until compliance has been documented. If a school approved for continued membership does not meet all the Standards, the school will be given one year to bring itself into compliance. At a given date, the school will be expected to report on what action has been taken in response to the school's own recommendations and those of the Visiting Committee and the Commission. The Commission may ask the staff to follow-up with the school on particular concerns or may schedule a formal Focused Visit to inquire into progress the school has made.

In addition to any Special Progress Reports or visits, all schools are required to file an Interim Evaluation Report after two and five years, which documents accomplishments in the follow-up process.