

THE SELF-STUDY

The self-study is the time period during which the school prepares for a visiting committee by evaluating its own educational program in terms of the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. Every public K-12 school, middle/high school, or high school seeking initial or continued accreditation must conduct a self-study and host a Commission visiting committee at least once every ten years as a requirement for accreditation. The focus question for the self-study is "How well do we meet the seven Standards for Accreditation?"

Preparations for the Self-Study

Overall Purpose of the Self-Study

This section describes the procedures for the self-study. The central purpose of the self-study is to draw and substantiate conclusions that the school has built about how well it meets each Standard for Accreditation. These conclusions will subsequently provide guidance regarding ways to strengthen and support the school's on-going efforts to improve its practices related to teaching and learning. The visiting committee's conclusions, informed by the school's self-study which will be based on the collection and analysis of evidence, ultimately provide the Commission on Public Secondary Schools with information that will affect the school's continued accredited status.

Length of the Self-Study

Based on a number of variables such as the size of the faculty, the allocation of release time, and the amount of time needed to complete existing initiatives, the self-study will take a minimum of two semesters; however, most schools elect to complete the self-study in three semesters.

Formation of the Steering Committee

The principal must form a Steering Committee to oversee all aspects of the self-study.

The principal or his/her administrative designee serves as a member of the Steering Committee. The principal should have an in-depth understanding of the Standards for Accreditation. While the principal does not have specific assignments, he/she provides guidance on school policies and procedures as well as additional assistance where needed, as in arranging release time to work on the self-study and in securing funds for the accreditation budget. The principal or the designee should attend all Steering Committee meetings.

The Steering Committee should be a representative group of individuals who have the ability to work well with others and have effective leadership skills. While most schools limit the committee to the professional staff, it need not be limited to the teaching faculty. The majority of member schools have designated co-chairs of the Steering Committee. In any case, the chair/co-chairs of the committee must have excellent leadership ability with the talent to coordinate the work of many people. The chair/co-chairs of the Steering Committee may be an administrator (not the principal), a department head/supervisor, or a teacher. *They, too, must have in-depth understanding of the Standards for Accreditation.*

The size of the Steering Committee may vary with the size of the faculty. Most committees average five to nine members. For middle/high schools, and K-12 schools, representatives from all levels should serve on the Steering Committee. Steering Committee members in general should not serve on other self-study committees, unless the size of the school requires their help in this area. The Commission staff recommends the Steering Committee have co-chairs.

The Steering Committee need not be a new and/or special ad hoc committee. It may be a standing committee.

The Commission staff strongly recommends that Steering Committee members as well as chairs of the Standards' committees serve on visiting committees to other schools being accredited as a way to broaden their understanding of the accreditation process.

Purpose of the Steering Committee

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to:

- Design and oversee the self-study process
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the *relationships* between each of the seven Standards for Accreditation to help individual Standards Committees understand their work in context
- Ensure preparation of the self-study report which includes three parts: the School and Community Summary (*the Steering Committee itself will write this brief document*), the seven Standards for Accreditation Reports, and the Statement of the School's Critical Strengths and Needs
- Write the School and Community Summary
- Coordinate efforts to collect the evidence requested by the seven Standards Committees and carefully monitor each Committee's collection
- Involve all school personnel in the self-study process
- Ensure that requirements and timelines are met
- Ensure that all evidence and documentation are available for the visiting committee when it is on-site
- Communicate yearly progress with CPSS staff liaison
- Complete the arrangements for the visiting committee.

Responsibilities of Steering Committee Members*

ORGANIZING THE SELF-STUDY

1. Contact Commission staff person assigned to the school
2. Distribute Preference Sheets
3. Make Standards Committee assignments
4. **Select** chair/co-chairs of Standards Committees
5. Develop self-study schedule/timeline after meeting with staff liaison
6. Order and administer opinion surveys (Endicott College)
7. Select and assign parents, students, and support staff members to appropriate Standards Committees
8. Apprise central office professional staff of their role(s) in the self-study
9. Assign steering committee members as *liaisons* to Standards Committees
10. Prepare budget in collaboration with the principal
11. Make preliminary plans for housing the visiting committee

PROCESSING THE SELF-STUDY REPORTS

1. Write the School and Community Summary
2. Monitor evidence gathering of each Standard Committee (check evidence boxes for quality and quantity of evidence)
3. Monitor analysis of evidence by each Standard Committee
4. Monitor development of Standards' Committee reports
5. Review each Standard report (Narrative and Executive Summary)
6. Distribute Standards reports to professional staff seeking comments/questions
7. Establish protocol for presentation of all reports at faculty meetings
8. Present by Standard Committee each report at faculty meetings
9. Conduct formal vote using the established protocol
10. Make final edits to Standards reports
11. Obtain Two and Five-Year Targets for Improvement document from Leadership Team and include in Self-Study
12. Organize all reports in preparation for the on-site visit

PREPARING FOR THE ACCREDITATION VISIT

1. Plan panel presentation
2. Plan Sunday reception
3. Finalize hotel and transportation arrangements
4. Meet with the chair and assistant chair of the visiting committee to review all components of the on-site visit
5. Mail materials to members of the visiting committee
6. Prepare list of teacher's individual daily schedules
7. Provide materials for the workroom at the school and the hotel:
 - self-study documents, including materials identified in the Self-Study Guides to be made available in the workroom
 - computers/printers/LCD projector (consult with chair)
 - clerical supplies.
8. Prepare list of school activities occurring during the on-site visit
9. Select student guides
10. Prepare list of rooms and times for small-group meetings with the visiting committee based on the schedule prepared by the chair

11. Prepare emergency information to be sent to the visiting committee
12. Invite all students to be shadowed and their parents/guardians to the Sunday reception
13. Invite all other appropriate personnel, local dignitaries, and guests to the Sunday reception
14. Make name tags for visiting committee members, professional and support staffs
15. Ensure professional and support staffs, other school system personnel, parents, students, and community members are available to meet with members of the visiting committees based on the schedule for the visit

**The Co-Chairs of the steering committee are responsible for organizing, leading and coordinating all aspects of the self-study. In collaboration with other steering committee members and with the principal, the co-chairs will determine individual responsibilities throughout the three phases of the self-study.*

Self-Study Materials

Commission Prepared Materials

Schools undergoing a self-study must use materials from the Commission on Public Secondary Schools. These materials are sent to the school once it has submitted an Application for Evaluation. Specifically, the materials include:

✓ **Accreditation Handbook**

Each school receives one hard copy. You may wish to review or download additional copies at <http://cpss.neasc.org>. Open Self-Study and On-Site Visit tab and see Self-Study Materials for **2013** schools.

✓ **Self-Study Guides on Standards for Accreditation**

These guides are used to determine the school's degree of adherence to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. The Commission office provides schools with one set of these guides (Word and PDF versions are also available on the website under **Self-Study Materials for 2013 schools**). Schools should plan to spend an average of two to three semesters per committee working to complete this part of the self-study. The number of hours that individual self-study committees need to complete their work may vary.

Additional Resources

Schools are also urged to consult the Association's website, <http://cpss.neasc.org>, under the Getting Started tab and under Explanation of the Standards to further inform their understanding of each of the seven Standards for Accreditation. This explanation includes detailed information on each of the indicators for each of the Standards. Additionally, schools may wish to review the "Guidebook: Developing and Implementing Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations." As well, sample narratives for each of the Standards are available for the 2011 Standards under the "Self-Study" tab.

A bibliography of suggested readings to support the Standards is available on the Association's website, <http://cpss.neasc.org> under Tools for School Improvement. Schools will find many citations under almost every indicator in all the Standards.

Please remember that all of the guides and books listed above are available on the website, many in both Word and PDF formats.

Opinion Surveys

As part of the self-study, schools are required to survey teachers, parents, and students.

Opinion Surveys

Contact: Peter Hart lehart@endicott.edu
Executive Director
Center for Research and Educational Advancement at Endicott College
(978) 232-5100

Developing an Evaluation Budget

Many of the expenses of an evaluation visit relate to the size of the visiting committee, which will vary depending on the school. The school may discuss the size and makeup of the committee with the Commission staff.

A survey of evaluation expenses for schools hosting visiting committees in 2010 appears on page 31. The following are descriptions of components which can assist you in the development of a budget for the evaluation of your school.

Training Seminars for School Personnel

The Commission sponsors regional Self-Study Seminars in the spring of each year for principals and Steering Committee members of schools about to begin the self-study. The purpose of these Seminars is to acquaint the school with the procedures of the accreditation process.

Additionally, the Commission conducts Evaluation Seminars in the spring and fall for member schools that will host visiting committees in the following season. These Seminars provide some last-minute suggestions and an opportunity to ask questions. The Seminars also give schools an opportunity to share reactions to the self-study process with members of the Commission staff and to discuss the events/schedule of the visiting committee. Schools have found these meetings helpful in assuring that everything is in place for the visiting committee's arrival and work.

Finally, the Commission sponsors Follow-Up Seminars in the spring and fall of each year for member schools that have hosted evaluation teams the previous season. The purpose of these seminars is to help schools organize and monitor their follow-up programs as well as to explain the requirements for completion of the Two-Year Progress Report and responses to highlighted recommendations by the Commission.

Schools are charged \$200 to attend each Self-Study, Evaluation, and Follow-Up Seminar to cover Commission expenses.

Re-Evaluation Fee

This figure is equivalent to a year's membership dues and is charged at the time of the visit.

Total for Visiting Committee Housing

This figure includes the cost of meals and rooms at a local hotel which has comfortable quarters including a conference room. The conference room should be adequate in size and provide appropriate privacy and security for the visiting committee.

Accommodations

Schools should reserve a single hotel room for each visiting committee member which provides basic amenities such as private bath, phone, and television. It is recommended that the school request the hotel's corporate or governmental rate for the committee and retain the right to return any rooms which are not used by the visiting committee.

Meals

Breakfast and dinner should be provided in the hotel with lunch served in the school. Approximate meal costs at the hotel can be determined by consulting the hotel staff. Schools may wish to consider providing a buffet each evening rather than ordering from a menu.

Visiting Committee Travel Expenses

Only those travel expenses such as mileage at the federal rate per mile and tolls incurred by visiting committee members traveling to and from the evaluation site should be paid by the school. Personal expenses are not reimbursable.

Welcoming Reception

The site of the reception and the menu, the list of invitees, and the timing are decisions to be made jointly by the principal, Steering Committee, superintendent, and school board. Input should be sought from the chair of the visiting committee regarding the time of the reception which generally occurs late afternoon on the Sunday of the visit. Members of the press are prohibited from attending the welcoming reception. Schools are urged to keep this event low-key and to remember that the visiting team will leave the event and proceed to the hotel where they will have dinner.

Refreshments

A modest amount should be budgeted for refreshments (coffee, tea, cold drinks, fruit, pastry) for the visiting committee during their three days in the school. It is important to provide coffee and tea in the workroom at the school each morning.

Clerical Expenses

On an infrequent basis, the visiting committee chair may request at least one person to complete word processing during the evaluation visit. These specific requirements may be discussed with the visiting committee chair during the preliminary visit(s). During the visit, the person who will do the word processing of the visiting team's report should have no affiliation with the school.

Clerical Supplies

Clerical supplies should include word processing and duplicating materials, binders, and stationery needed during both the self-study and evaluation visit phases of the program.

Materials to be Ordered

The school will need to budget for the purchase of the Opinion Surveys prepared by Endicott College.

Chair's Travel Expenses

The visiting committee chair and the assistant chair will travel to the school for a pre-visit no later than one month prior to the evaluation visit. Some chairs plan to make an additional visit before the visiting committee is on site.

Chair's Expenses for Preparing Written Draft of Report

The chair must secure clerical support to prepare visiting committee schedules prior to the evaluation visit and to correspond with members of the visiting committee. In addition, while the responsibility for the duplication of the final report rests with the school principal, the chair will also incur expenses for preparing the draft of the report and the final evaluation report.

Editor's Expenses

The host school is responsible for the expense of the work of the Commission's professional editor. Schools should budget approximately \$400 to cover the work of the professional editor. *In addition, the chair will submit a bill for clerical support. The average cost ranges from \$375 - \$400.*

School's Cost of Preparing Final Evaluation Report

As noted previously, the school is responsible for the duplication and distribution of the final evaluation report, including sending a copy to visiting committee members. Steering Committee chairs should save visiting team e-mail addresses so that the final report can be sent electronically to team members.

Postage

Money should be budgeted for sufficient postage for at least one mailing to the members of the visiting committee. All mail must be sent first class or United Parcel Service to ensure prompt delivery.

Other Expenses

Miscellaneous expenses included in this category may range from photography for the welcoming reception to telephone expenses and refreshments for Steering Committee meetings and faculty in-service days.

The information that follows provides the most recent figures received from institutions accredited by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools. Since procedures are carried out locally and vary accordingly, the survey will not reveal the exact amount to be budgeted for a specific self-study and evaluation visit. Nonetheless, the survey can help you plan for different aspects of the process and advise you of the amounts of money spent by schools comparable to yours. The survey is arranged by state since some evaluation costs differ according to location.

Survey of Evaluation Expenses

The information provided is representative of information submitted by schools accredited during the 2010 calendar year. Please note that this information is *state specific*.

School's Cost for Training Sessions	CT	ME	MA	NH	RI	VT
Self-Study Seminar	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200
Evaluation Seminar	200	200	200	200	200	200
Follow-up Seminar	200	200	200	200	200	200
Self-Study Related Materials						
Self- Study Opinion Surveys *	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Visiting Committee Expenses						
Cost of Rooms	6,800	4,200	6,500	5,500	6,150	5150
Cost of Meals – Hotel and School	2,880	1,250	2,850	2,510	2,500	2,485
Cost of Welcoming Reception	750	750	750	750	750	750
Travel Expenses – Committee Members	750	1,200	935	940	900	1,120
Travel Expenses – Chair	275	400	375	270	250	350
Clerical Expenses						
For preparation of self-study materials	400	400	400	400	400	400
During three-day visit of committee	350	350	350	350	350	350
Chair's Clerical Cost of Preparing Written Draft of Report (not to exceed)	400	400	400	400	400	400
Supplies and Materials						
School's Evaluation Report Printing Costs	250	250	250	250	250	250
CPSS Editor	375	375	375	375	375	375
Postage	300	300	300	300	300	300
Other Expenses (technology, etc.)	890	790	880	520	655	570
Re-Evaluation Fee **						
Equivalent to one year's membership dues charged at the time of the visit	3,070	3,070	3,070	3,070	3,070	3,070
TOTAL	\$18,990	\$15,335	\$19,035	\$17,235	\$17,950	\$16,170

* based on student enrollment of 1000 students

** estimated cost for schools evaluated in 2010 based on enrollment of 1,000

Scheduling a Commission Staff Visit

A visit from a member of the professional staff of the Commission on Public Secondary Schools is a crucial part of the accreditation process. Each school has a Commission staff person assigned to work with the school throughout the self-study process, and the staff person begins by spending part of a day at the school meeting with three groups of staff members to help the school begin the process.

The principal should contact the Commission staff person assigned to the school (identified in a letter from the Director in late summer) and arrange a convenient time, ideally at the *beginning* of the self-study, for the visit. Commission staff members who are invited to meet with school officials and staff *early in the process* can be helpful in guiding the school to make the best use of its time throughout the self-study process. The Commission staff member typically addresses the entire faculty for approximately an hour to explain current Commission procedures, the importance of the self-study, the role of the visiting committee, and the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. Additionally, the staff member also meets with the Steering Committee for approximately one hour to highlight major points in the organization and planning of the self-study.

Finally, the staff member meets with the chairs/co-chairs of the seven Standards for Accreditation Committees for one hour to discuss their responsibilities. The staff member answers questions concerning accreditation procedures and confers with the principal and Steering Committee. This service is provided at no cost to member schools. The Commission staff person will schedule visits to Spring 2013 schools in early to mid-Fall of 2011. Schools scheduled for Fall 2013 visits are visited after those who have Spring 2013 visits, but it may be possible for the Commission staff member to visit a school in the late fall to mid-winter.

The Commission strongly suggests that central office administrators, interested parents, students, and school board members be invited to attend the meeting with the faculty as involvement of these groups in the self-study is required.

In preparation for the Commission staff visit, Steering Committee members should read the self-study section of this *Handbook* (available on line at <http://cpss.neasc.org>). The faculty should read and discuss the Standards for Accreditation, and Standards Committees chairs/co-chairs should read the self-study guides provided for their committees.

The Commission's website also provides other very helpful information including: an explanation of the 2011 Standards for Accreditation, a bibliography with references for indicators in each Standard, sample narratives, and regular updates about programs of use to schools are among other resources on the website. Of particular interest to principals and other school leaders is the *Guidebook: Developing and Implementing Core Values, Beliefs, and 21st Century Learning Expectations*.

Suggestions for Composition of Self-Study Committees

The self-study involves all faculty members by having them serve on committees whose purpose is to examine the school's adherence to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. The Steering Committee should survey the faculty to determine their preferences for serving on the various committees. The sample preference sheet on page 35 is useful in identifying the specific areas in which faculty can express interest.

The steering committee should assign each faculty member to serve on one of the Standards for Accreditation committees. Individual schools must also determine whether it is necessary or desirable for steering committee members to serve on any of the Standards Committees, but in any case steering committee members are best used as liaisons to Standards Committees so they can provide support to the co-chairs of these Standards Committees. Steering committee members should never serve as chairs of Standards Committees. The Commission requires that schools involve support staff, students, parents, and other community members in various sections of the self-study as deemed appropriate by the school's steering committee. Therefore, each school must make its own decision regarding the committees in which students, parents, and community members are involved. Schools are encouraged to use standing committees if appropriate.

Standards Committees

These committees should include a cross section of teachers as well as students, parents, and community members. Specifically, the following is recommended for each of the Standards Committees:

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations	Curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teachers - parents - students - school committee/board members - building administrator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teachers - department heads - students - supervisors or administrators responsible for curriculum and instruction
Instruction	Assessment of and for Student Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - department heads - supervisors or administrators responsible for curriculum and instruction - teachers - parents - community members - students - guidance counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teachers - administrators or supervisors responsible for curriculum evaluation/educational testing - guidance personnel responsible for using educational testing results - students - parents
School Culture and Leadership	School Resources for Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teachers - representative from building administration - support staff - paraprofessionals - supervisors or administrators who are responsible for supervision and evaluation - students - parents - community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teachers - guidance personnel - library technology and media personnel - special education teacher(s) - administrators or supervisors responsible for guidance, special education, and library technology services - school nurse - students - parents - community members
Community Resources for Learning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teachers whose programs are particularly dependent upon the facility (e.g., athletics, science, industrial arts, performing and fine arts) - director of maintenance/head custodian - students - parents - community members - teachers and administrators involved in developing the budget - central office personnel involved in developing the budget 	

Commission on Public Secondary Schools

Preference Sheet

Self-Study Committee Assignments

TO: All Faculty

FROM: Steering Committee, Principal

Please check in order of preference (1, 2, 3) three areas you are interested in for the purpose of serving on one of the self-study committees. If you indicate no preference, the Steering Committee will make assignments as committee needs dictate.

Please return to _____ **by** _____
(Name) (Date)

Standards for Accreditation Committees

Teaching and Learning Standards

- _____ Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations
- _____ Curriculum
- _____ Instruction
- _____ Assessment of and for Student Learning

Support Standards for Teaching and Learning

- _____ School Culture and Leadership
- _____ School Resources for Learning
- _____ Community Resources for Learning

Name _____

Sequence of the Self-Study Committees' Work

School and Community Summary (Steering Committee)

This Committee uses the School and Community Summary instructions below. The School and Community Summary is a two page (please recognize this number is a change from previous years) narrative which provides general information to the visiting committee about the school, its location, and its place within the community. A sample description is included in this Handbook on pages A1-A2. Particular care should be taken in writing this as the visiting committee will use it verbatim in the school's evaluation report.

The Steering Committee is charged with the responsibility of writing the School and Community Summary which will appear in the decennial/initial evaluation report. In gathering this information/data, the Steering Committee should access the school system's/district's reports that they are required to submit to state and federal offices.

Instructions for the Steering Committee

1. Gather the information/data for the each of the following:
 - location of the town/city/district in the state
 - the socioeconomic profile of the community
 - racial/cultural/ethnic makeup of the school district
 - number of district families living below the poverty level
 - number of schools in the system/district (public and independent)
 - grade configuration of the school
 - current student population
 - enrollment stability
 - expenditure per pupil for students assigned to the school in relation to state average
 - percentage of local resources spent on public education
 - percentage of local taxation spent on schools
 - two-year average dropout rate, stated as a percentage
 - graduation rate, stated as a percentage
 - attendance rate of students
 - attendance rate of teachers, excluding professional days
 - percentage of students who attend four-year colleges, attend two-year colleges, enter directly into the work force, and enter the military
 - local educational opportunities available to students and the community
 - school/business partnerships
 - school/college partnerships
 - student recognition programs.
2. Review the information to ensure its accuracy.
3. Write a narrative summary which incorporates the items in number 1 above and limit your narrative to two single-spaced pages. See Appendix pages A1 and A2 for sample.
4. This narrative summary becomes the School and Community Summary, and it should be made available to the professional staff for their review. ***Note: While the summary does not have to be approved by the professional staff, the staff should have the opportunity to review it and to provide clarification and input.***

Standards Committees

It is *strongly recommended* that prior to the Standards Committees beginning their work, the required Opinion Surveys should be administered to students, teachers, and parents by the Steering Committee. Results from the questionnaires should be shared with the entire faculty as they may have implications for a number of the Standards for Accreditation. Disaggregated data from the surveys should be distributed to the appropriate Standards Committee.

Each of the Standards Committees needs to be well-prepared in order to complete effectively the Standards Reports and Executive Summaries.

- ✓ Before the Standards Committees begin their work, they should thoroughly read the school's statement of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations as knowledge and understanding of this document are essential to their work.
- ✓ Each of the seven Standards Committees should also read and discuss its assigned Standard for Accreditation to develop and ensure a common understanding of the concepts contained in the narrative portion and indicators for the Standard. The Commission's website <http://cpss.neasc.org> (see "Getting Started" tab and "Explanation of the Standards" section) provides valuable clarification of the concepts and indicators contained in the Standards.
- ✓ Depending upon the ability of both parties to coordinate time schedules, it is strongly advised that the school's liaison visit early in the process and conduct three meetings with Steering Committee, Chairs of the Standards Committees, and the faculty.
- ✓ Once the Standards Committees have reviewed and discussed the Standards, they must begin to collect the evidence that is listed in the Self-Study Guide for their Standard. Committee members should try to locate all of the evidence listed, but they should also remember it is possible the school will not have all of the evidence.
- ✓ As soon as the evidence has been collected, Committee members should begin to review and discuss the evidence according to the prompts in the Self-Study Guide. This process will take time and the Chair/Co-Chairs of the Standards Committee should ensure that healthy analysis and discussion occurs about each piece of evidence. It is strongly suggested that members of the Steering Committee observe these discussions to **ensure that evidence has not only been collected but that the evidence is also used in the discussions.**
- ✓ Following the discussion, the Committee must draw a conclusion about the extent to which the school adheres to the Standard and each indicator, based on the use of the evidence collected. The conclusion the committee draws should be stated in one sentence, and this sentence should be underlined. The Committee will then complete the paragraph with detailed sentences that support the Committee's underlined conclusion and come from the collected evidence and the Committee's analysis. The evidence in these sentences forms the details that justify or support the underlined conclusion. The Committee will write at least one paragraph for each indicator in the Standard; for some indicators with bullets, the Committee may write more than one paragraph.
- ✓ This narrative essay should be 8-12 double-spaced pages (6-8 double-spaced pages for Standard 1 since there are only four indicators about which to write in this Standard).

- ✓ Each Standard Committee must then prepare an Executive Summary in which the Committee identifies and lists the school's strengths and needs in adhering to each Standard and prepares a one-page narrative of the conclusions and evidence.
- ✓ Following an examination of the Commission's rating guide for the Standard, the Committee must determine the rating (deficient, limited, acceptable, exemplary) for the indicated level of adherence to the Standard and include it in the Executive Summary.

The collection of evidence, discussion and analysis of evidence, drawing of conclusions based on the prompts in the Self-Study Guides, and the writing of the Standards Reports and Executive Summaries will likely require a minimum of one and one-half years (or three semesters) of work.

Sample Standards Reports and Executive Summaries are available on the Association's website, <http://cpss.neasc.org> under Self-Study and On-Site Visit.

Faculty Approval of Standards Reports and Executive Summaries

Guidelines for Review of Standards Reports and Executive Summaries

Before the Executive Summaries for the Standards are presented to the entire faculty and administration for approval, they should be reviewed by a committee of selected professional staff, including, but not limited to English teachers, to determine comprehensiveness and ease of readability. The following guidelines may aid in this review process:

1. The reports should reference the narrative portion of the Standard and specifically underline and discuss each of the indicators set forth in the text of the Standards.
2. A conclusion should be drawn for each indicator and written in concise, direct, straightforward language which describes the degree to which the school adheres to the Standard. This sentence should be underlined.
3. All information should be presented in coherent, unified paragraphs.
4. Reports should be written in the third person (as opposed to the first person).
5. All abbreviations and acronyms contained in the essays should be spelled out fully when first referenced in each Standard to ensure comprehension by the general reader [e.g., Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).]
6. All statistical information contained in the reports should remain consistent from one Standard to another.
7. Specific groups within the school community which are referred to within the reports should be identified clearly and specifically, e.g., board of education members, central office administration, building-level administration, faculty, support staff, parents, students, citizens.

Process for Discussion and Approval of Standards Reports and Executive Summaries

Prior to the presentation of the seven Standards Executive Summaries, the Steering Committee should inform the professional staff how the materials will be presented, how the discussion will be developed, and how approval will be sought.

Before the faculty meeting at which time an Executive Summary is scheduled to be presented, copies of the entire Standard report should be available electronically to the professional staff for review. Each faculty member should also receive a copy of the Executive Summary of each Standard report. To save paper, the school might consider making the reports available to the faculty through secure electronic files on the school's network. A minimum of a week's time should be provided for review. Professional staff should have the opportunity to provide feedback and/or seek clarification.

At the scheduled time, each Standards' Committee should make a formal presentation of its findings regarding the school's adherence to the Standard to the entire faculty and field questions prior to a vote. Standards' Committees should be prepared to offer the rationale for each of the strengths and needs identified in the Executive Summary as well as for the conclusions discussed in the essays regarding the school's adherence to each Standard. The Steering Committee should ensure that faculty agree to the conclusions drawn regarding the extent to which the school meets each indicator in each of the Standards. The school may wish to project the Rating Guide and the directions for using the guide with each Standard for all to see during the discussion, since the Rating Guide forms the basis upon which the Committee will have made its judgment about the school's adherence to the Standard.

If no significant issues arise, the Steering Committee should seek the approval by a minimum of a two-thirds majority vote. Schools may also seek consensus, choosing to work out any differences which faculty may have with a committee's findings. Committee members other than faculty and administration may sit in on these meetings, but they do not have voting rights. If the Steering Committee senses that significant issues/questions have been raised that cannot be resolved quickly, it should table the report and send it back to the Standard Committee for review and resubmission to the faculty at a later date.

Statement of the School's Critical Strengths and Needs

The faculty and administration should meet to identify the school's critical strengths and critical needs which have emerged during the self-study through discussion of the seven Standards for Accreditation. One method that schools have used to determine the critical strengths and needs is to compile a list of all the strengths and needs identified in the Executive Summaries from the seven Standards reports. Each member of the professional staff is then asked to identify the most significant critical strengths and needs from that list. The Steering Committee uses the faculty responses to prepare the summary statement of critical strengths and needs. The list should be shared with the professional staff. *A summary statement of these school-wide critical strengths and needs should be included with other self-study materials and provided for the visiting committee.* A sample summary statement appears in the Appendix on page A3.

Two-Year and Five-Year Targeted Plan

Once the entire Self-Study has been completed **the principal and the leadership team** (not the Steering Committee) should read the entire report with special attention to the list of strengths and needs developed for the school. This leadership team must then develop a Two-Year and Five-Year targeted plan to address the needs identified by the school in its self-study. A sample Two-Year and Five-Year targeted plan appears in the Appendix on Page A4. This document is also part of the information provided for the Visiting Committee.

Press Releases

Seven press releases for use at various points during the self-study are included in the Appendix on pages A9-A18. Schools are urged to inform the community of the school's progress during the self-study using either these press releases or articles written by the school. These press releases could also be posted in the NEWS section of a school's website as another method of informing the school's stakeholders of this process.

Availability of Self-Study Materials

The Commission recommends that self-study materials not be reviewed by the school board or the public since they are considered to be working documents. In Massachusetts, however, a ruling issued by the Secretary of State's office determined that member schools can be required to make self-study materials available to interested parties once they have been approved by the professional staff.

Preparation for Hosting the Visiting Committee

The principal and the Steering Committee should confirm and review all arrangements made for the visiting committee, including housing, meals, work space, conference rooms, clerical help and supplies, refreshments, and transportation to and from the school. The following items should be especially noted:

- a. A plan should be agreed upon for the transportation of visiting committee members from their lodgings to the school. Members may carpool or use transportation arranged by the school, and the school should designate some spaces for the Committee with spaces available for all committee members on the final day of the visit.
- b. In-school conference and workroom facilities should be carefully chosen for accessibility, space, privacy, availability of electrical outlets and to Internet access, and security. Remember that visiting committees need space for their materials as well as yours. School officials should ensure that the workroom facilities at the school and the hotel are secure.
- c. Clerical supplies should be adequate and easily accessible to the visiting committee.
- d. Availability of word processing equipment for Committee members to use during the visit should be discussed as should the availability of LCD projectors in both workrooms. Visiting teams have found the use of laptop and notebook computers very useful during the on-site visit. In fact, some visiting committee members may choose to bring personal computers for this purpose.

Arranging Hotel Accommodations

One of the most important details of the evaluation visit is the matter of hotel accommodations for the visiting committee. Accommodations for visiting committee members must provide appropriate amenities including private, secure rooms with a private bath, a telephone, television, and adequate desk space.

The following questions, gathered from the experiences of other accredited schools, may help you to determine whether a specific hotel property can meet your requirements. The Steering Committee member who will act as a liaison with the hotel should review these questions with the hotel management before making a decision on housing for the visiting committee.

1. Is the hotel able to provide single occupancy rooms for each member of the visiting committee which include basic amenities such as a private bath, phone and television?
2. Is there a conveniently located conference room adequate in size to accommodate the visiting committee?
3. Does the conference room provide an appropriate atmosphere for the work of the visiting committee (appropriate lighting, adequate ventilation, comfortable temperature, adequate wiring and outlets for notebook computers, quiet, appropriate equipment, tables and chairs)?
4. Will group(s) in the adjacent conference rooms pose any disruption to the work of the visiting team?
5. Will the conference room be available when needed (all day Sunday, and Monday and Tuesday evenings from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.) and is it secure, with a key available for the chair?
6. Is there a charge for the conference room or is it provided free if other hotel services are utilized?
7. Can the conference room accommodate the technology needed by the Committee, including free access to the Internet?
8. Is there a conveniently located copy machine available for the Committee's use?
9. Are the rooms comfortable and clean with adequate lighting, ventilation, temperature control and a desk?
10. How close to the time of the evaluation visit will the hotel need the final room count?
11. What dining accommodations can the hotel make (menu choices, including a buffet, seating arrangements, times, private location)?
12. What additional costs besides the basic room rate can be expected (dinner, breakfast, conference room)?
13. Are corporate/governmental rates available?
14. How far in advance will the hotel guarantee its cost estimate for the evaluation visit?
15. What is the per-person cost including all charges?
16. Who will be the local contact person at the hotel?
17. What are the billing arrangements?

Selection of the Visiting Committee

The Commission staff will select a chair and assistant chair and provide those names to the principal of the accredited school. Appropriate, careful and deliberate consideration is given to the type and size of each school, its unique features, and the availability of the dedicated educators who serve as chairs and assistant chairs for the Commission on Public Secondary Schools. Chair and assistant chairs are selected by the professional staff because they possess the experience, qualities, and skills compatible with the characteristics of the school and have received training regarding the self-study and the on-site evaluation visit. Once the selections have been confirmed, the individuals will be invited to serve. Visiting committees are selected from lists of educators nominated by member school principals, superintendents, and college administrators. Committee members are selected by the Commission staff and communicated to the school's principal who may request that a committee member not serve. If there is a conflict of interest, the principal should contact the Commission staff person working with the school.

Preliminary Visit by the Chair

The chair of the visiting committee will arrange a preliminary meeting with the principal and Steering Committee at least one month in advance of the evaluation visit. The chair and principal refer to the Checklist of Discussion Topics for the Chair's Preliminary Visit on pages 45-46 to ensure that all necessary preparations have been made for the visit. The chair also reviews the self-study procedures and the completed Checklist of Required Self-Study Materials on pages 47-48. The principal may wish to discuss with the chair those key strengths and needs which he or she would like to see discussed in the evaluation report in addition to those identified at the end of the self-study, as well as any special initiatives, continuing problems, and/or unique features or characteristics of the school. Before leaving, the chair and the assistant chair should also be given the entire self-study report to review so that, if needed, additional information and clarification may be sought before the visit begins.

Checklist of Discussion Topics for the Chair's Preliminary Visit

- ✓ The awareness of the faculty, staff, students, and community of the accreditation process and purpose of the team's evaluation
- ✓ The collection and availability of evidence for each of the Standards
- ✓ Completion of the Essays and Executive Summaries on Standards for Accreditation
- ✓ The school's Statement of Critical Strengths and Needs identified in the self-study
- ✓ The leadership team's Two-Year and Five-Year Plan to address Needs identified in the self-study
- ✓ Arrangements for lodging, check-in time, and meals for members of the visiting committee
- ✓ Arrangements for technology use during the visit
- ✓ The Sunday afternoon schedule for the panel presentation, teacher interviews, and meetings with administrators and the school board
- ✓ Selection by the chair of teachers to be interviewed on Sunday and the requirement that each teacher bring two examples of student work to the meeting
- ✓ Selection by the school of students to lead facility tour on Monday
- ✓ Selection by the chair of students to be shadowed
- ✓ Welcoming Reception (one hour limit with light refreshments and no school entertainment)
- ✓ The team workroom at the school – discuss size, location and supplies which should include name tags, worktables, a minimum of seven computers, printer(s), an LCD projector, a paper shredder (if available), paper, scratch pads, copies of the Committee schedule, a complete copy of teachers' schedules as well as photos of individual teachers, master schedule for the wall, a complete set of curriculum guides, supporting materials for the self-study, student record forms, administrative forms, student publications, and examples of student work.
- ✓ The conference room at the hotel – discuss size, location and supplies which should include name tags, work tables, a minimum of seven computers, printer(s), and LCD projector, an easel with paper, scratch pads, pens, markers, copies of the Committee's schedule, and a copy of the school's master schedule.
- ✓ In general, the team should have a total of nine computers: one per Standard and one for the chair and assistant chair (laptops are preferable since they can be used at the school workroom as well as at the hotel workroom). Plan to discuss the need with the chair; he or she will know who will be bringing computers from home. Technology assistance should be available at the school and on-call in case needed at the hotel, rather than word-processing help.

- ✓ Provision of a complete set (hard copy) of self-study materials for each of the following:
 - the visiting committee chair
 - the visiting committee assistant chair
 - the visiting committee members (*send appropriate sections per direction of the chair*)
 - the visiting committee workroom
 - the school (original copy).

- ✓ Materials to be sent to each Committee member via first class mail or United Parcel Service at least three weeks before the visit:
 - the School and Community Summary
 - a copy of the school's narrative of core values and beliefs
 - a copy of the school's 21st century learning expectations
 - program of studies
 - bell and daily class schedule
 - copies of the self-study reports *for the areas to which each visiting committee member has been assigned*
 - letter of welcome from school officials
 - copy of the floor plan of the building
 - visiting committee work and meeting schedule (prepared by chair)
 - list of visiting committee members and their school addresses
 - directions to the school and hotel
 - list of emergency phone numbers (school, local hospital, etc.).

- ✓ Small group meetings to be held during the school day and after school

- ✓ Plans for reimbursement of travel expenses

- ✓ The availability of student guides

- ✓ An overview of how the evaluation report is developed

- ✓ Press releases about the school visit

- ✓ The school's responsibility for the cost of professional editing of the draft of the report

- ✓ The school's responsibility for the cost of technology support for the chair following the team visit

- ✓ The school's responsibility for duplication of the final evaluation report

Checklist of Required Self-Study Materials – (submit to Chair and Professional Staff liaison with copy of Self-Study)

The following checklist may be used by the Steering Committee to ensure that the appropriate materials are prepared and finalized.

If self-study materials are not available for timely distribution to the members of the visiting committee or are of a quality that precludes their effective use by the visiting committee, the accreditation visit will be postponed or canceled.

The chair of the visiting committee will ask for the following information at the time of the preliminary visit:

I. School and Community Summary

- School and Community Summary completed _____
- Number of Steering Committee meetings to complete this _____

II. Standards for Accreditation Reports

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

- Report and Executive Summary completed _____
- Number of Committee meetings _____
- Date of faculty approval _____

Curriculum

- Report and Executive Summary completed _____
- Number of Committee meetings _____
- Date of faculty approval _____

Instruction

- Report and Executive Summary completed _____
- Number of Committee meetings _____
- Date of faculty approval _____

Assessment of and for Student Learning

- Report and Executive Summary completed _____
- Number of Committee meetings _____
- Date of faculty approval _____

School Culture and Leadership

- Report and Executive Summary completed _____
- Number of Committee meetings _____
- Date of faculty approval _____

School Resources for Learning

- Report and Executive Summary completed _____
- Number of Committee meetings _____
- Date of faculty approval _____

Community Resources for Learning

- Report and Executive Summary completed _____
- Number of Committee meetings _____
- Date of faculty approval _____

III. Statement of the School's Critical Strengths and Needs

- Date Statement of Critical Strengths/Needs completed _____
- Date of faculty approval _____

IV. Two-Year and Five-Year Targeted Plan

- Date of Two-Year and Five-Year Targeted Plan Completion _____

V. Opinion Surveys

Required Opinion Surveys:

- Endicott College
Date(s) when surveys were conducted _____

Groups Surveyed:

Students	Size of Sample	# Returned

Parents	Size of Sample	# Returned

Professional Staff, Faculty	Size of Sample	# Returned

Welcoming Reception

The school should plan to host a welcoming reception, approximately one hour in length, for the visiting committee on the first day of the accreditation visit. ***A lavish welcoming dinner is not permitted since it is not appropriate to the purpose of the Committee visit, might interfere with the accreditation process, and could create misunderstanding in the community.*** The Commission recommends that guests should include the superintendent of schools, members of the school board, other community officials, the Steering Committee, the entire professional staff, and students who will be shadowed and their parents. The visiting committee chair will help establish the agenda for the reception.

The purpose of this hour-long reception is to welcome the visiting committee formally, to provide the chair an opportunity to address the group regarding the overall purpose of the team visit, and to afford the school one final opportunity to describe the setting and priorities of the community to the visiting committee.

Materials to be Placed in the Visiting Committee Workroom

Prior to the Committee's visit, the Steering Committee should gather the following materials to be placed in the visiting committee workroom:

- copies of the school's teacher handbook
- the daily schedule of the school
- copies of teachers' schedules including photos of individual teachers
- clerical supplies
- complete set of all self-study materials, including Reports, Executive Summaries and attached documentation/ information
- portfolio of student work
- additional required evidence and documentation from each Standards Committee
- results of the Opinion Surveys from Endicott College
- computers - schools might wish to provide laptop computers which could also serve the needs of the visiting committee at the hotel (check with the chair of your visiting committee regarding which committee members might be bringing a personal computer)

Sample Timeline

Suggested Schedule for Spring 2013 Evaluation Visits

April - June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalize selection of co-chair and Steering Committee membership
May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attend Self-Study Seminar - Submit press release on seminar participation to local news media
June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit application for Evaluation - Submit press release on Steering Committee selection to local news media - Draw up tentative budget for self-study and evaluation visit
August 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive letter from CPSS with date for the evaluation visit
September 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive Accreditation Packet - Distribute preference sheets for Committee assignments - Make committee assignments - Schedule date for a Fall 2011 visit by Commission staff member
October 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Order and administer required parent, teacher, and student self-study opinion surveys
October to December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin work on School and Community Summary and collection of evidence
December 2011 to April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share School and Community Summary with staff - Collect and analyze data - Begin plans to accommodate the visiting committee
May 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalize plans for visiting committee accommodations - Steering Committee Chair(s) contact Commission staff to update progress
September to December 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draw conclusions based on analysis of evidence and write Standards reports - Complete Executive Summaries of Standards Reports - Make available Standards Reports in their entirety for review by professional staff - Submit Executive Summaries of Standards Reports for approval by the professional staff - Faculty develop Statement of School Critical Strengths and Needs - Submit press release on completion of Standards Reports to local new media - Steering Committee Chair(s) contact Commission staff to report completion of the self-study - Attend Evaluation Seminar

November 2012 to February 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive selection of chair and assistant chair
January 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop 2 and 5-year targeted plans based on school's critical strengths and needs - Organize self-study materials for visiting committee workroom - Review the visiting committee list for acceptances - Prepare preliminary information to be mailed to visiting committee members - Make final preparations for welcoming reception - Steering Committee Chair(s) contact Commission staff liaison to update progress
January 2013 to March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet with visiting committee chair and assistant chair to discuss topics on the preliminary visit checklist - Submit the following to the Commission office: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. School's Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations b. A set of the analytic rubrics c. School and Community Summary d. Printed or electronic copies of the seven Standards Reports and Executive Summaries e. Statement of School's Critical Strengths and Needs f. Program of Studies booklet g. Checklist on Completion of Self-Study Materials - Obtain visiting committee assignment from chair and mail appropriate self-study materials to visiting committee members along with preliminary information described in the Accreditation Handbook - Schedule times and rooms for meetings between groups and appropriate visiting committee members; discuss Committee assignments and work schedule with chair - Remind all constituents of scheduled meetings with visiting committee members during on-site visit and of importance of promptness - Finalize preparations for teacher interviews and the panel presentation
March to May 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide appropriate materials in visiting committee workroom in the school - EVALUATION VISIT BEGINS - Submit press release on visit of Committee to news media
May to July 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair sends draft of evaluation report to Commission staff - Commission staff reviews draft and discusses it with chair; professional editor reviews draft; Chair sends revised draft to principal; principal reviews for factual accuracy and other concerns and communicates with chair; chair prepares final evaluation report and mails two copies to the principal
August 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principal distributes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. sufficient final copies of report to school board, central office administration, faculty, and public b. one final copy of report to State Department of Education
September 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attend Follow-Up Seminar - Commission reviews report and takes action
October/November 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission notifies principal, superintendent, and board chair of Commission Action

Sample Timeline

Suggested Schedule for Fall 2013 Evaluation Visits

April to June 2011	- Finalize selection of co-chair and Steering Committee membership
May 2011	- Attend Self-Study Seminar - Submit press release on Seminar participation to local news media
June 2011	- Submit Application for Evaluation - Submit press release on Steering Committee selection to local news media - Draw up tentative budget for self-study and evaluation visit
August 2011	- Receive letter from CPSS with date for the evaluation visit
September 2011	- Receive Accreditation Packet - Schedule future date for a visit by Commission staff member
January 2012	- Distribute preference sheets for Committee assignments - Make Committee assignments
February 2012	- Order and administer required parent, teacher, and student self-study opinion surveys (this step could also be done in Fall 2011)
February to April 2012	- Begin work on School and Community Summary and collection of evidence
March to May 2012	- Share School and Community Summary with staff - Begin plans to accommodate the visiting committee - Collect and analyze data - Steering Committee Chair(s) contact Commission staff liaison to update progress
September to December 2012	- Finalize plans for visiting committee accommodations - Draw conclusions based on analysis of evidence and begin to write Standards reports
February to April 2013	- Complete writing of seven Standards Reports - Complete Executive Summaries of Standards Reports - Make available Standards Reports in their entirety for review by professional staff - Submit Executive Summaries of Standards reports for approval by the professional staff - Faculty develop Statement of School's Critical Strengths and Needs - Submit press release on completion of Standards Reports to news media - Steering Committee Chair(s) contact Commission staff to report completion of the self-study - Attend Evaluation Seminar

May to June 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive selection of chair and assistant chair - Develop 2 and 5-year targeted plans based on school's critical strengths and needs
June to September 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize self-study materials for visiting committee workroom - Review the visiting committee list for acceptances - Prepare preliminary information to be mailed to visiting committee members - Make final preparations for welcoming reception
September 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet with visiting committee chair and assistant chair to discuss topics on the preliminary visit checklist - Submit the following to the Commission office: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. School's Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations b. A set of the analytic rubrics c. School and Community Summary d. Printed copies of the seven Standards Reports and Executive Summaries e. Statement of School's Critical Strengths and Needs f. Program of Studies booklet g. Checklist on Completion of Self-Study materials - Obtain visiting committee assignment from chair and mail appropriate self-study materials to visiting committee members along with preliminary information described in the Accreditation Handbook - Schedule times and rooms for meetings between groups and appropriate visiting committee members; discuss Committee assignments and work schedule with chair - Remind all constituents of scheduled meetings with visiting committee members during on-site visit and of importance of promptness - Finalize preparations for teacher interviews and the panel presentation
September to November 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide appropriate materials in visiting committee workroom in the school - EVALUATION VISIT BEGINS - Submit press release on visit of Committee to news media
December 2013 to January 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair sends draft of evaluation report to Commission staff - Commission staff reviews draft and discusses it with chair; professional editor reviews draft; chair sends revised draft to principal; principal reviews for factual accuracy and other concerns and communicates with chair; chair prepares final evaluation report and mails two copies to the principal
February 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principal distributes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. sufficient final copies of report to school board, central office administration, faculty, and public b. one final copy of report to State Department of Education
March 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission reviews report and takes action
April/May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Notification to principal, superintendent, board chair of Commission Action

Checklist for the Self-Study and Committee Visit

The length of time required for each step will depend upon the total time allotted to the self-study.

1. Principal appoints chair(s) and members of the Steering Committee and reviews all self-study materials
2. Commission assigns the dates and sends the school its Accreditation Packet containing press releases and the Guides on Standards for Accreditation which are to be used during the self-study.
3. Order required Opinion Surveys
4. Submit press release on selection of Steering Committee to local media.
5. Arrange for a visit by a Commission staff member to talk with the faculty and Steering Committee about accreditation procedures.
6. Hold a Steering Committee meeting to discuss the Standards and develop a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between them
7. Develop a budget for the self-study and evaluation visit and submit for school committee/board approval.
8. Solicit faculty preferences for service on self-study committees.
9. Establish calendar of events for the evaluation process, allowing time for the gathering of evidence needed by Standards Committees, and for Standards Committees to work individually and present reports to the total faculty. Develop a public relations program to keep the community informed of progress.
10. Order necessary supplies (binders, paper, etc.) taking into consideration clerical needs for both the self-study and the evaluation visit.

Securing Plans for Lodging and Dining

- Investigate lodging for visiting committee to include a conference room and suitable dining accommodations for breakfast and evening meals. Lunches should be available at the school.

School and Community Summary

- 1. Steering Committee prepares a brief, two-page narrative: The School and Community Summary
- 2. Share the School and Community Summary with professional staff

Distribution of Opinion Surveys

- 1. Administer Opinion Surveys from Endicott College.....

Standards Committees Begin Work

- 1. Assign faculty to Committees to evaluate the school's adherence to the Standards for Accreditation.....
- 2. Collect all evidence requested in each Self-Study Guide.....
- 3. Analyze and discuss the collected evidence
- 4. Prepare the narrative report, including an Executive Summary, which describes the school's adherence to the Standard
- 5. Determine the school's adherence to the Standard, based on review of the report, using the Rating Guide for the Standard
- 6. Review Standards for Accreditation Reports and Executive Summaries to determine factual accuracy, comprehensiveness, and ease of readability.....
- 7. Present Standards for Accreditation Reports and Executive Summaries to the professional staff for approval after allowing sufficient time to review the reports in their entirety.

Development of the Statement of the School's Critical Strengths and Needs

Faculty and administration identify the school's critical strengths and needs from the Self-Study.

Development of the Two-Year and Five-Year Benchmarks

School leaders identify the Two-Year and Five-Year targeted areas for improvement.....

Making Appropriate Copies of Self-Study Materials

Make multiple copies of each Standard for Accreditation Report and Executive Summary after their acceptance by the professional staff and after you have met with the chair of your visiting committee (one for school use, one available for the visiting committee work area, one each for the chair and assistant chair of the visiting committee, and additional copies for each visiting team member assigned to a particular Standard). Although addenda materials must be available to the visiting committee during the on-site visit, it is not necessary to mail them in advance.

Development of the Visiting Committee

1. Respond to Commission staff correspondence regarding the composition of the visiting committee.
2. Respond to the selections from the Commission office of the chair and assistant chair of the visiting committee.

Preliminary Visit with the Visiting Committee Chair

Meeting with the chair of the visiting committee to discuss the Checklist of Discussion Topics for the Chair's Preliminary Visit.

Materials to be Sent Electronically by the School Before the Committee's Visit

1. No later than one month before the evaluation visit send electronically the following completed self-study materials to the Commission liaison assigned to your school.
 - copy of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
 - School and Community Summary
 - printed copies of reports and executive summaries for the seven Standards
 - statement of the school's critical strengths and needs
 - copy of the school's Two-Year and Five-Year Targeted Plan
 - copy of the *Program of Studies* booklet
 - checklist on completion of self-study documents

There is no need to send all the self-study attachments and documentation to the Commission office, only those items that have been specifically requested above. However, the school is responsible for keeping a copy of the full text of the school's self-study.

2. Prepare a packet of information to be mailed to visiting committee members as indicated on the Checklist of Discussion Topics for the Chair's Preliminary Visit (please see page 46).

This packet should be mailed at least three weeks prior to the evaluation visit. Please consult with the Chair regarding which information should be mailed to each team member.

Before the Visit

1. Gather the materials to be placed in the visiting committee workroom.....
2. Make arrangements for lunches, rest rooms, and technical assistance while the Committee is at the school during the day.
3. Develop a chart showing all teacher assignments and rooms for each period.
4. Make final arrangements for the welcoming reception on the first day of the evaluation visit, including invitations to local guests.....
5. Prepare for panel presentation to the visiting committee.
6. Develop a list of student guides, by period, for visiting committee use
7. Develop a list of student activities (clubs and athletics) meeting during the evaluation visit
8. Review with the faculty the purpose of the Committee's visit.
9. Alert the faculty of the need for and location of small-group meetings as scheduled with the visiting committee.
10. Schedule a faculty meeting at the close of the evaluation visit for the chair's closing remarks.....
11. Submit a press release on the evaluation visit by visiting committee to local media

During the Visit

1. Check availability of supplies and work area for visiting committee.....
2. Make available one member of the Steering Committee to supply information or answer questions of visiting committee members.
3. Reimburse visiting committee members' voucher expenses.....

After the Visit

1. Principal consults with the visiting committee chair. Topics to be discussed include: factual accuracy, conclusions, commendations/recommendations, the Overview of Findings section, concerns of interpretations, phraseology.
2. Arrange for the printing of a sufficient number of evaluation reports.....
3. Mail **one** copy of the evaluation report to the appropriate state department of education.
4. Return the Questionnaire for Principals to the Commission office.....

5. Return the Distribution, Use and Scope of Evaluation Report form to the Commission office.....
6. Return the Survey of Evaluation Expenses Form to the Commission office.
7. Distribute copies of visiting committee report to the faculty, school committee/board, each member of the visiting committee, and the public within 60 days of receipt of the final copy.....