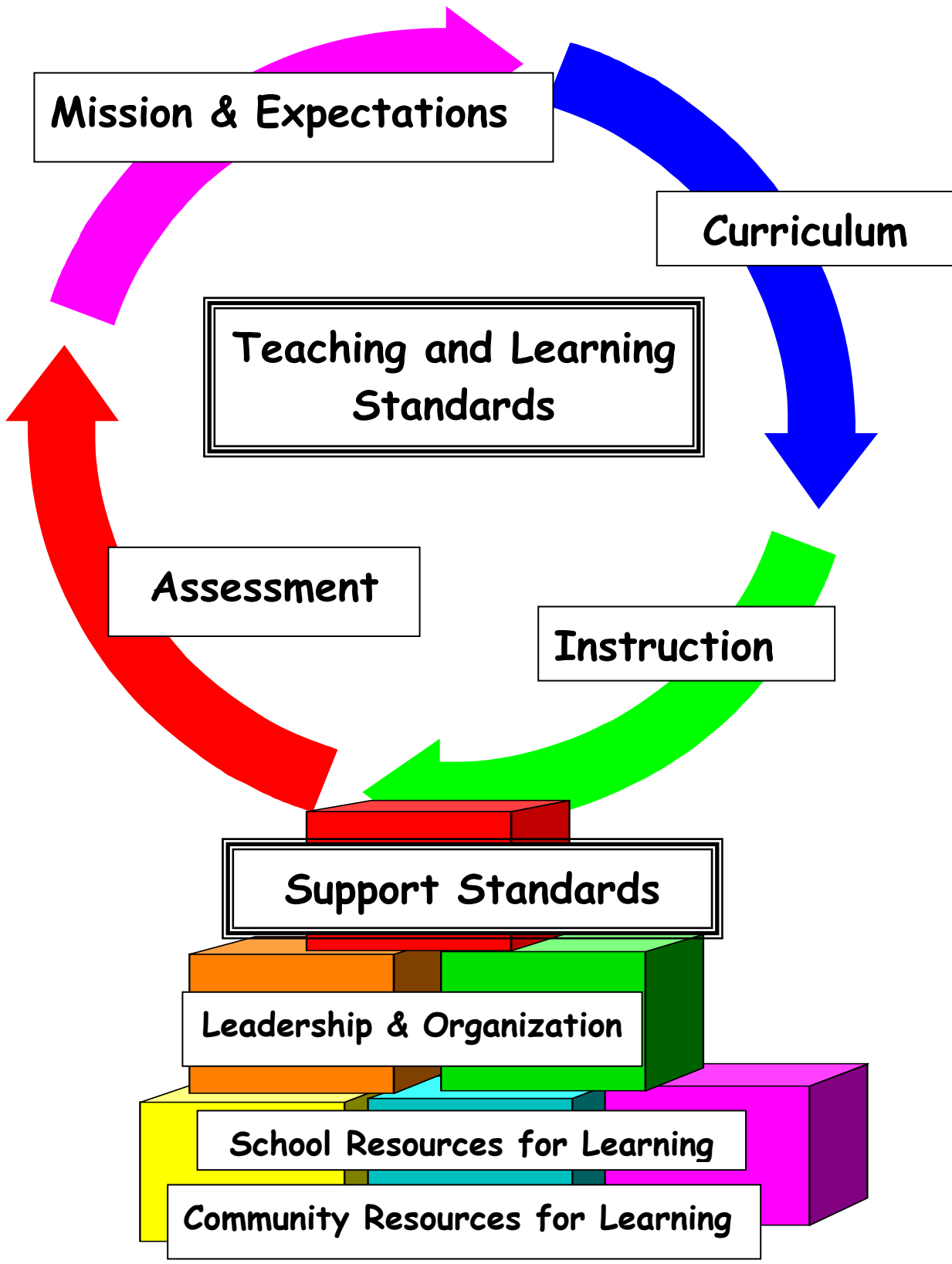


Introduction

Using the indicators and guiding prompts, this Standard Committee is charged with the responsibility of developing a document that demonstrates the extent to which the school is adhering to the Standard for Accreditation on Instruction. Committee members should keep in mind that the process of determining adherence to the Standard is a dynamic one. As evidence is gathered and discussed, the Committee's conclusions may change and evolve, be altered and refined.

Before You Begin

1. Make a copy of this Self-Study Guide for each member of the Standard Committee from the website: <http://cpss.neasc.org>.
2. Review the contents of the document, *Explanation of the Standards for Accreditation*, located at <http://cpss.neasc.org> under the "Getting Started" tab, which was developed to clearly explain and illustrate the meaning of the Standard. The website includes guiding questions and statements for each indicator (available through the links indicated by the question marks) as well as a glossary which defines key terms and concepts referred to in the Standard.



TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARD

3

INSTRUCTION

The quality of instruction in a school is the single most important factor affecting the quality of student learning, the achievement of expectations for student learning, the delivery of curriculum, and the assessment of student progress. Instructional practices must be grounded in the school's mission and expectations for student learning, supported by research in best practice, and refined and improved based on identified student needs. Teachers are expected to be reflective about their instructional strategies and to collaborate with their colleagues about instruction and student learning.

1. Instructional strategies shall be consistent with the school's mission statement and expectations for student learning.
2. Instructional strategies shall:
 - personalize instruction;
 - make connections across disciplines;
 - engage students as active learners;
 - engage students as self-directed learners;
 - involve all students in higher order thinking to promote depth of understanding;
 - provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge or skills;
 - promote student self-assessment and self-reflection.
3. Teachers shall use feedback from a variety of sources including other teachers, students, supervisors, and parents as a means of improving instruction.
4. Teachers shall be expert in their content area, knowledgeable about current research on effective instructional approaches, and reflective about their own practices.
5. Discussion of instructional strategies shall be a significant part of the professional culture of the school.
6. Technology shall be integrated into and supportive of teaching and learning.
7. The school's professional development program shall be guided by identified instructional needs and shall provide opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their instructional strategies.
8. Teacher supervision and evaluation processes shall be used to improve instruction for the purposes of enhancing student learning and meeting student needs.

Instructions for Completing the Self-Study Report

1. Read and discuss the Standard for Accreditation on Instruction so that all members of the Standard Committee develop a common understanding of the effective practices in the Standard. The Standard is comprised of both the narrative portion and the numbered indicators. The concepts in the narrative portion are manifested through the indicators. As part of your discussion, utilize the prompting questions and glossary from the document, *Explanation of the Standards for Accreditation*, located at <http://cpss.neasc.org> under the “Getting Started” tab.
2. Draw initial, working conclusions about the extent to which the school is achieving each of the indicators and the narrative portion of the Standard.¹ For example, with regard to Indicator #5, a working conclusion might read: “For the last four years the faculty have regularly discussed instruction and the desired quality of student work at the department level and as a school with regard to the senior project.” Then the committee would have to identify the evidence to support this conclusion. On the following pages you will find the text of the Standard in bold followed by prompts for each indicator. Use the prompts for each indicator to guide your discussion of evidence needed to support the committee’s working conclusions about the Standard.
3. Gather evidence and/or information from departments/teams or elsewhere to support the committee’s working conclusions. You may want to create an Information Request Form to help gather the evidence from various sources. (A sample is provided on page A1 in the Appendix of the *Accreditation Handbook*.) The committee should also review the results of the Opinion Questionnaires administered to parents, students, and teachers with regard to this Standard as they are a rich source of evidence, keeping in mind that salient findings should be incorporated into the narrative essays.
4. Identify all relevant data in the School and Community Profile and ensure its inclusion in the Standards essay.
5. Analyze and discuss all the gathered evidence and/or information related to your working conclusions about the school’s adherence to each of the indicators and to the narrative portion of the Standard. During the discussion/analysis of each indicator, it may be helpful to take notes and to record pertinent information using the text of this Self-Study Guide. The committee should agree to each final conclusion and to the fact that the evidence is accurate and appropriately supportive.

¹ Note: Conclusions are about what is happening now, not about what you should be doing or what action you plan to take in the future.

6. Write a report of 8-12 double-spaced pages presenting and discussing *evidence* that justifies the *conclusions* of the extent to which you meet the indicators in the Standard as well as the concepts in the introductory paragraph of the Standard. Your report should discuss each of the indicators in order and have a conclusion for each indicator. Bold, italicize, or underline each conclusion.
7. Attach all requested documentation/information indicated with an * in this Guide. Attachments are not included in the 8-12 page limit.
8. Prepare requested additional documentation/information indicated with a ⊗ to be available in the visiting committee workroom.
9. Write the Executive Summary of the conclusions and evidence. Consult the Guidelines for Review of Standards Essays and Executive Summaries in the *Accreditation Handbook* (page 38).

Content of the Executive Summary

- Use the rating guide provided on pages 6 and 7 to determine the school's level of adherence to the Standard on Instruction based on the conclusions and supportive evidence in the essay.
- Write a one-page summary of the evidence in the report that led to the committee's judgment of the school's level of adherence to the Standard on Instruction.
- Identify and list the school's strengths in adhering to the specific indicators in the Standard on Instruction.
- Identify and list the school's needs for improvement in adhering to the specific indicators in the Standard on Instruction.
- Attach a list of the names, positions, and signatures of the committee members responsible for the preparation of this Essay and Executive Summary. Signatures of committee members attest to the thoroughness of the committee's work and to the veracity of the Essay and Executive Summary.

A sample essay and executive summary are available on the Association's website, at <http://cps.neasc.org> under the "Self-Study" tab.

RATING GUIDE FOR INSTRUCTION STANDARD

DEFICIENT:

- The instructional strategies in the school:
 - are on the whole not consistent with the school's mission statement and expectations for student learning (The school's level of adherence to the Community Resources for Learning Standard, Indicators 3 and 8 should be considered in making this judgment), **or**
 - fail significantly and broadly to personalize instruction, make connections across disciplines, engage students as active learners, engage students as self-directed learners, involve all students in higher order thinking to promote depth of understanding provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge or skills, and promote student self-assessment and self-reflection; **or**
- The teachers lack expertise in their content area.

LIMITED: The instructional strategies in the school:

- are **minimally** consistent with the school's mission statement and expectations for student learning, **or**
- only **minimally** personalize instruction, make connections across disciplines, engage students as active learners, engage students as self-directed learners, involve all students in higher order thinking to promote depth of understanding, provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge or skills, and promote student self-assessment and self-reflection, **or**
- The teachers display minimal expertise in their content area; **or**
- The school/teachers have difficulty in adhering to a **majority** of the following:
 - Teachers use feedback from a variety of sources as a means of improving instruction; **or**
 - Discussion of instructional strategies is a significant part of the school's professional culture; **or**
 - Technology is integrated into and supportive of the curriculum; **or**
 - The school's professional development program is guided by identified instructional needs and does provide opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their instructional strategies; **or**
 - The teacher supervision and evaluation process is used to improve instruction for the purposes of enhancing students learning and meeting student needs.

ACCEPTABLE:

- Instructional strategies:
 - are consistent with the school's expectations; **and**
 - include strategies that personalize instruction, make connections across disciplines, engage students as active learners, engage students as self-directed learners, involve all students in higher order thinking to promote depth of understanding, and provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge or skills, and promote student self-assessment and self-reflection; **and**
- The teachers are:

- very knowledgeable in their content area;
- conversant about current research on effective instructional approaches; **and**
- reflective about their own practice; **and**

- the school meets only **some** of the statements under the **EXEMPLARY** Standard below.

EXEMPLARY: Instructional strategies:

- are consistent with the school's expectations
- include strategies that substantially personalize instruction, make connections across disciplines, engage students as active learners, engage students as self-directed learners, involve all students in higher order thinking to promote depth of understanding, and provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge or skills, and promote student self-assessment and self-reflection; **and**
- The teachers are:

- expert in their content area,
- knowledgeable about current research on effective instructional approaches, **and**
- reflective about their own practice; **and**

- The school/teachers adhere to a **majority** of the following:

- teachers use feedback from a variety of sources as a means of improving instruction; **and**
- discussion of instructional strategies is a significant part of the school's professional culture; **and**
- technology is integrated into and supportive of teaching and learning; **and**
- the school's professional development program is guided by identified instructional needs and provides opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their instructional strategies; **and**
- the teacher supervision and evaluation process is used to improve instruction for the purposes of enhancing students learning and meeting student needs.

Instruction

The quality of instruction in a school is the single most important factor affecting the quality of student learning, the achievement of expectations for student learning, the delivery of the curriculum, and the assessment of student progress. Instructional practices must be grounded in the school's mission and expectations for student learning, supported by research in best practice, and refined and improved based on identified student needs. Teachers are expected to be reflective about their instructional strategies and to collaborate with their colleagues about instruction and student learning.

1. Instructional strategies and practices shall be consistent with the school's stated mission and expectations for student learning.

- a. [⊗]Provide representative examples by curriculum area of ways that the instructional practices in classrooms reflect and support the beliefs and values about learning articulated in the school's mission statement.
- b. Summarize ways that instruction is reflective and supportive of the school's mission and expectations.
- c. Assess the extent to which instructional practices reflect the beliefs, values, and expectations for student learning in the mission.

2. Instructional strategies shall:

- **personalize instruction;**
 - **make connections across disciplines;**
 - **engage students as active learners;**
 - **engage students as self-directed learners;**
 - **involve all students in higher order thinking to promote depth of understanding;**
 - **provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge or skills;**
 - **promote student self-assessment and self-reflection.**
- a. [⊗]Provide representative examples which show how instructional strategies and practices:
 - i) personalize instruction (teachers meet regularly with individuals or small groups to address individual learning needs, recognize individual learning styles and adjust instructional strategies accordingly);
 - ii) make connections across disciplines (teachers are knowledgeable about and show students how a given topic extends across disciplines);

[⊗] Provide requested documentation/information in the visiting committee workroom.

- iii) engage students as active participants in class discussions, group work, student presentations, labs (teachers facilitate lessons and learning activities that result in a predominance of student activity);
 - iv) engage students as self-directed learners (teachers act as coaches and ask students to reflect on their own work);
 - v) involve students in higher order thinking to promote depth of understanding (teachers focus on key concepts, spend sufficient time to allow students to understand in depth, encourage problem-solving and inquiry-based learning, and ask questions and use assessment strategies which encourage students to apply, analyze, synthesize, compare/contrast, and evaluate);
 - vi) provide students with opportunities to demonstrate and apply knowledge authentically (writing for audiences beyond the classroom, sharing portfolios with parents and critical friends, engaging in project work that leads to formal public presentations, participating in internships and school-to-career opportunities, etc.).
 - vii) promote student self-assessment and self-reflection (teachers routinely and regularly call upon students to critique their own work and that of their peers, e.g., through peer writing groups, portfolio assessment, etc.).
- b. Assess the extent to which varied instructional strategies are used throughout the school.
 - c. Assess the extent to which teachers provide regular opportunities for students to assess their own learning.

3. Teachers shall use feedback from a variety of sources including other teachers, students, supervisors, and parents as a means of improving instruction.

- a. [⊗]Provide some specific examples of ways in which teachers have used feedback as a means of improving instruction.
- b. Briefly describe the processes in place to ensure that teachers, students, supervisors, and parents have opportunities to provide feedback to individual teachers, including new teachers, about their instructional practices.
- c. Assess how well teachers use feedback from a variety of sources to improve their instruction.

[⊗] Provide requested documentation/information in the visiting committee workroom.

4. Teachers shall be expert in their content area, knowledgeable about current research on effective instructional approaches, and reflective about their own practices.

- a. ⊗ Provide examples by curriculum area (including, if applicable, vocational/technical and e-learning areas) of ways that teachers acquire knowledge and remain current about instructional practices in their curriculum areas.
- b. ⊗ Provide examples of instances where administrators and instructional leaders share literature including research on "best practice" with teachers.
- c. Briefly describe how teachers show evidence of self-reflection regarding their work (e.g., by maintaining a teacher portfolio, etc.).
- d. Assess the extent to which teachers are current about instructional practices appropriate for a full range of learners.
- e. Assess the adequacy of opportunities that encourage teachers to be reflective about the teaching-learning process.
- f. Assess the impact on learning due to the provision of instruction by teachers who have minors in their teaching field or who hold provisional certification. (see School and Community Profile for current data, p. 12)

5. Discussion of instructional strategies shall be a significant part of the professional culture of the school.

- a. Describe ways in which teachers formally and informally engage in discussions related to effective instructional practices (e.g., through teacher teaming, critical friends groups, etc.).
- b. Assess the extent to which discussions about instruction are a significant part of the professional culture of the school.

6. Technology shall be integrated into and supportive of teaching and learning.

- a. Briefly describe representative examples of how technology is utilized to support teaching (e.g., graphing calculators in math, computer simulations in science, computer instruction in math and language arts skills, etc.).
- b. Briefly describe representative ways in which students are called upon to use technology as a means to apply knowledge and to increase computer literacy (e.g., computer animation in math, spreadsheets in social studies and science, PowerPoint presentations in language arts, word processing for all major writing assignments, graphic design in technology education, etc.).

⊗ Provide requested documentation/information in the visiting committee workroom.

- c. Assess the extent to which technology is utilized to support teaching and improve student learning.

7. The school's professional development program shall be guided by identified instructional needs and shall provide opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their instructional strategies.

- a. *Attach a listing of the professional development offerings related to the improvement of instructional practices offered within the last two years. Divide the list into two categories: ongoing professional development around particular instructional topics and short-term professional development offerings related to instructional practice.
- b. Describe the extent to which professional development opportunities are created in response to identified instructional needs.
- c. Assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the professional development program provided to improve instruction.

8. Teacher supervision and evaluation processes shall be used to improve instruction for the purposes of enhancing student learning and meeting student needs.

- a. Describe ways that teacher supervision and evaluation processes address instructional strategies and practices.
- b. Assess the effectiveness of teacher supervision and evaluation processes in improving instruction.

* Attach requested documentation/information.