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THE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL’S ACCREDITATION WORK:
PRODUCING A SELF-STUDY

The Process of the Self-Study Report
The process by which the Catholic high school completes its Self-Study report requires the school to organize into focus groups that will work to accomplish the Self-Study. This work entails clarifying the school’s purpose, amassing data, analyzing the data, discerning “findings” — strengths as well as areas for improvement — and detailing plans for improvement. Having accomplished its Self-Study report, the school submits it to WCEA and prepares to receive a WCEA Visiting Committee, the purpose of whose visit is to verify the contents of the report.

A Self-Study is Familiar
The process of a Self-Study is not new for a Catholic high school in WCEA. For the past fifteen years, this kind of Self-Study has been a familiar experience. The particular format that has been in use, Focus on Learning, is widely known for its focus groups, its Expected Schoolwide Learning Results, its criteria, and its schoolwide action plan regarding improvement. This format has been a successful one over the years, not least because it has increased the school’s ownership of the accreditation process. For example, the format has involved the constituent groups of the school community and has empowered the school to declare its own preferred future — in the form of a schoolwide improvement plan.

A New Direction for WCEA
With the increasing formalization of the Western Catholic Educational Association over the past ten years, the time has come for a Catholic high school accreditation format that is derived from Catholic school experience and philosophy. The format that has emerged is Ensuring Educational Excellence (E3). There are some new features of the Self-Study that E3 embraces. At the same time, there is much within E3 that can be seen to coincide with the format that has preceded it, Focus on Learning.

The School’s Self-Study
WCEA accreditation requires a Catholic high school to enter into an eighteen-month process of Self-Study. The format for accomplishing the report is entitled Ensuring Educational Excellence (E3). This format has four chapters:
   I. Introduction
   II. School Purpose
   III. Findings
   IV. Educational Improvement Plan (EIP).
OUTLINE of ENSURING EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE (E3)

I. Introduction to the School
   A. Name
   B. Address
   C. School's Year of Inception
   D. Nature of the School
   E. Governance Structure
   F. Administrative Structure
   G. Organization Chart
   H. Administrative Personnel
   I. Instructional Personnel
   J. Staff Personnel
   K. Board/Council
   L. Parent Organization/s
   M. Alumni Organization
   N. Brief History of the School
   O. Most Significant School Developments since the last Self-Study

II. School Purpose
   A. Mission Statement
   B. Philosophy Statement
   C. Integral Student Outcomes

III. Findings (i.e., key strengths and key areas for growth, in light of Standards and other criteria)
   A. Catholic Identity Standards
      A.1 Catholic Purpose
      A.2 Worship
      A.3 Religion Curriculum
      A.4 Religion Teachers
      A.5 Partnership with Parents
      A.6 Service Orientation
      A.7 Signs and Symbols
      A.8 Religious Engagement of All
   B. School Organization Standards
      B.1 Governance
      B.2 Administration
      B.3 Teachers
      B.4 Support Staff
      B.5 Organizational Structure
   C. Teaching and Learning Standards
      C.1 Curriculum: What Students Learn
      C.2 Instruction: How Students Learn
      C.3 Assessment: Its Forms and uses
      C.4 Reporting Student Achievement
   D. Student Support Standards
      D.1 Educational Environment
      D.2 Co-Curricular Programs
      D.3 Academic Support
      D.4 College Matriculation
   E. Material Stewardship Standards
      E.1 Enrollment Resources
      E.2 Educational Resources
      E.3 Plant Resources
      E.4 Funding Resources
      E.5 Business Operations
      E.6 Promotional Operations
IV. Educational Improvement Plan (EIP)
   A. Implementation of the Prior Plan from the last Self-Study
   B. Current Educational Improvement Plan

New Features in the E3 Self-Study Compared to the FOL Self-Study

The Self-Study process that the school has completed according to E3 has some new features included:

- a ‘Catholic Identity’ set of standards
- a Data Library
- a more compact format for the Findings chapter
- a more department-driven analysis of the teaching and learning within the school.

E3 acknowledges the fundamental importance of the Catholic Faith by going beyond the Catholic requirements of FOL by fully integrating the eight standards of Catholic identity that the school is expected to meet. Data-driven reporting reaches a new level of significance in the form of the Data Library of E3. This library of data — ‘library’ because of its extensiveness — must be constructed near the outset of a school’s E3 process so that the school will have sufficient evidence that leads to credible findings in Chapter III. The Findings chapter itself represents another example of ‘what’s new in E3.’ This third chapter does not require the lengthy narrative writing that was required in FOL. In place of narrative, Chapter III of E3 first requires robust, data-informed focus group discussions in response to “key questions.” These discussions lead to the discernment/identification of strengths and key growth areas with brief accompanying rationales—these are what is meant by ‘findings’ in E3. Another new feature of E3 that deserves mention here is a process-related feature, namely an emphasis on department home-groups as a way of gathering and analyzing data (especially that which is related to teaching and learning). These four features of E3 are new compared to Focus on Learning.
THE VISITING COMMITTEE of WCEA

WCEA’s Visiting Committee
The WCEA Visiting Committee is comprised of a chairperson and several members (the number of whom is influenced by the size of a school). While the chairperson is normally drawn from another Catholic diocese, the members are generally drawn from other Catholic high schools within the school’s own diocese. One of the members may be a representative of the regional secular accrediting body with which WCEA partners. In advance of their visit to the school, the chairperson and members are trained for their work by WCEA. This training involves orienting the Visiting Committee to the format by which the school has gone about producing its Self-Study report, namely Ensuring Educational Excellence. In view of their training, the Visiting Committee members understand the professional obligations that are upon them, including but not limited to the need for unity, integrity, and confidentiality. The first of these requires the members to collaborate, to the point of striving for consensus in important judgments concerning the school. The second obligation means that the Visiting Committee thinks and acts without prejudice to the school. The requirements of integrity call for the Visiting Committee to dispose itself to receive both the school’s report and the school’s reality and to receive these things without any preconceived judgments that are based on a committee member’s experience at his/her own school. The last of these obligations means that the Visiting Committee does not publicly disclose the proceedings or results of its work.

The Work of the WCEA Visiting Committee
In advance of their visit to the school, the chairperson and members each receive a copy of the school’s Self-Study report. They familiarize themselves with the Self-Study, according to which they form first impressions of the school. The committee is then trained for its work, training that includes, among other things, how to accomplish some writing in advance of the visit. Writing in advance of the visit is important; this writing is not meant to overshadow the essential work that awaits the committee at the school, namely the work of discerning the actual educational quality of the school. The school’s Self-Study report serves as an important lens by which to view the school and begin to see its quality. Even more important for discerning the school’s quality is the visit, which evaluates and validates what the school has written in its Self-Study. The on-site visit allows for an experience of the school itself. This visit entails experiences of: classroom dynamics, the co-curricular programs, students’ work, school persons’ and groups’ reflections on what they do and the school’s improvement aspirations. By these experiences the Visiting Committee is able to verify what the school has declared in its Self-Study. The visit is required for gaining a true sense of the school’s quality.

The on-site visit includes more than a Visiting Committee gathering experiences of the school. There must be time devoted to the Visiting Committee’s reflection and discussion of their school experiences. This reflection-and-discussion is interspersed throughout the three days of the visit and is sufficient to develop focused, consensual insights about the quality of the school. These insights are recorded in the Visiting Committee’s report (which is given to the school) and they substantiate an overall recommendation concerning the accreditation of the school (which is given to the WCEA Commission).
Outline of the Visiting Committee’s Report: Seven Sections
The Visiting Committee writes a report of its experiences. The report does not imitate the written format that the school used in its Self-Study. The Visiting Committee report is organized according to the seven principles of WCEA accreditation. The basic question that guides the written reporting of the committee is whether the school sufficiently observes each of the principles. The following outline reveals the format of the report:

**Introduction**
I. School’s Observance of Principle A: Authentic Catholic Identity
II. School’s Observance of Principle B: Organizational Efficacy
III. School’s Observance of Principle C: Excellence of Teaching and Learning
IV. School’s Observance of Principle D: Vitality of the Support Programs
V. School’s Observance of Principle E: Stewardship of Material Resources
VI. School’s Observance of Principle F: Commitment to Improvement
VII. School’s Observance of Principle G: Integrity of Self-Study Process
SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF WCEA HIGH SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

There are seven principles that a school is meant to observe, according to the requirements of WCEA accreditation. The seven principles are:

A. The Authenticity of the School’s Catholic Identity
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a school’s Catholic identity ought to be authentic. Here, ‘authenticity’ means that, in all its understandings and operations, the school is oriented toward God; the teachings of the Catholic church; and the rites, rituals and practices of the Catholic faith.

B. The Organizational Efficacy of the School
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a Catholic school ought to be systematically and carefully organized and effectively managed.

C. The Excellence of the Teaching and Learning
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that the school’s teaching and learning ought to be of the highest quality. Here, ‘teaching and learning’ refers to the classroom context and dynamic. By ‘excellence’ or ‘highest quality’ is meant that an exemplary curriculum is delivered and the maximum learning capacity of each student is realized.

D. The Vitality of the Co-Curricular Programs
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that the co-curricular or ancillary programs (i.e., in addition to the classroom) should add vitality to the overall school program. By ‘vitality’ it is understood that the school has programs and activities which complement the classroom education and are conducive to the development of students as whole persons.

E. The Stewardship of Material Resources
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that the management of a school’s material resources ought to be carried out responsibly, for the well-being of others, i.e., primarily students. This ‘responsible management’ is stewardship. In the Catholic high school context, they who manage a school’s material assets or resources are stewards. They ought to do so in a spirit of care and accountability.

F. The Commitment to Improvement
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a school ought to be committed to improvement, in whole and in parts. What is meant by ‘improvement’ begins in a school’s estimation of itself and its operations. ‘Improvement’ requires a school to strive for a better fulfillment of its mission.

G. The Integrity of the Process of a Self-Study
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a school’s Self-Study process must demonstrate integrity — i.e., inclusivity, honesty, and thoroughness — throughout the whole of the process.
The Primacy of the Principle of Authentic Catholic Identity
It is important to note that the first of the principles – authentic Catholic Identity – can be said to have pride of place among the seven. This principle highlights the faith and traditions of the Catholic Church, establishing the Faith – the formation of students according to this Faith – as the fundamental reason for the school’s existence and identity. All school reality is meant to be seen in light of its Catholic identity, and no part of school life may fail to manifest this principle. It may be likened to a unifying thread or pattern within the whole fabric of accreditation. It adds beauty, the beauty of coherence, to the fabric. Without confusing the matter of this principle’s significance, another metaphor is helpful here, the metaphor of the heart. Catholic identity is the heart of the matter in a Catholic school because Catholic schooling has to do first with the formation of students in Christ. Thus the accreditation principle that is ordered to Catholic Identity is at the heart of accreditation.

The Significance of the Other Six Principles
After Catholic identity, the six remaining principles are autonomous, and each has inherent significance in relation to the school’s mission. The principle of Excellence of Teaching and Learning, the “classroom principle” carries greater weight than any of the other five because it is directed to the second great action that constitutes the school mission, the formation of students in culture. Next, the Commitment to Improvement principle is especially important as it embraces the whole of school life. Finally, the remaining three principles -- Organizational Efficacy, Co-Curricular Programs, and the Process of the Self-Study -- share collective significance for accomplishing accreditation.
THE PRINCIPLES AND CORRESPONDING STANDARDS OF E3

Standards
Each of the seven principles of WCEA accreditation is comprised of several standards. A standard is an essential element of a principle. Each standard may be distinguished in itself. At the same time the standard does not stand alone; it exists as part of a principle. There are ordinarily several standards that comprise each principle of accreditation. The standards, taken together, are the means by which a principle is seen.

Principles and their Standards
In what follows, the seven principles of WCEA accreditation are stated, along with the standards that constitute each principle. The principles are ordered from ‘A to G.’ It will be evident from a viewing of them that the first five of these principles (i.e., A through E) correspond exactly to the “five areas” according to which the twenty-eight standards in Chapter III of Ensuring Educational Excellence are organized.

A. The Authenticity of the School’s Catholic Identity
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a school’s Catholic identity ought to be authentic. Here, ‘authenticity’ means that, in all its understandings and operations, the school is oriented toward God; the teachings of the Catholic church; and the rites, rituals and practices of the Catholic faith. There are eight standards by which WCEA discerns a school’s authentic Catholic Identity:

A.1 Catholic Purpose
The school has a mission statement and a philosophy statement that indicate the integration of the Roman Catholic Faith into all aspects of school life.

A.2 Worship
The school ensures regular opportunities for the students to experience prayer, retreats, and the Sacraments.

A.3 Religion Curriculum
The school uses a Religion curriculum and instruction that is faithful to Roman Catholic Church teachings, subject to the authorization of the Local Ordinary, and that otherwise meets the requirements set forth by the USCCB.

A.4 Religion Teachers
The formation of religion teachers for catechetical and instructional competence is ongoing.

A.5 Partnership with Parents
The school maintains an active partnership with parents whose fundamental concern is the spiritual and academic education of their children.

A.6 Service Orientation
The school helps students develop a service-oriented outreach to the Church and civic community after the example of Jesus who said, “I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done.” (John 13:15)

A.7 Signs and Symbols
There is widespread use of signs, symbols, sacramentals, traditions and rituals of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the school.
A.8 Religious Engagement of All
All school personnel are actively engaged in bringing the Good News of Jesus into the total educational experience.

B. The Organizational Efficacy of the School
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a Catholic school ought to be systematically and carefully organized and effectively managed. There are five standards by which WCEA discerns a school’s organizational efficacy:

B.1 Governance
The governance body of the school responsibly keeps the school’s mission, delegates responsibility as necessary, and monitors for accountability regarding what is delegated.

B.2 Administration
The school administration provides quality leadership for the personnel and the operations by which the religious and educational objectives of the school are realized.

B.3 Instructional Personnel
Instructional personnel are qualified for their responsibilities and are committed to professional development toward ensuring that the religious and educational objectives of the school are realized.

B.4 Support Staff
School support staff engage in duties essential to the effectiveness of the school’s religious and educational operations.

B.5 Organizational Structure
The organizational structure of the school—its offices, departments, schedules, modes of communication, and deployment of personnel—and the operations pertinent to this structure are optimum for realization of the religious and educational objectives of the school.

C. The Excellence of the Teaching and Learning
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that the school’s teaching and learning ought to be of the highest quality. Here, ‘teaching and learning’ refers to the classroom context and dynamic. By ‘excellence’ or ‘highest quality’ is meant that an exemplary curriculum is delivered and the maximum learning capacity of each student is realized. There are four standards by which WCEA discerns the excellence of a school’s teaching and learning:

C.1 Curriculum/What Students Learn
The school provides a challenging, coherent, and relevant curriculum for students to accomplish the educational outcomes that the school sets for them.

C.2 Instruction/How Students Learn
Instructional personnel use a variety of appropriate methods by which to maximize the learning experiences of all students in accomplishing the educational outcomes that the school sets for them.

C.3 Assessment
School personnel responsibly engage in assessment of students’ progress in accomplishing the educational outcomes.

C.4 Reporting Student Achievement
School personnel responsibly report students’ achievement in accomplishing the educational outcomes that the school sets for them.
D. The Vitality of the Co-Curricular Programs
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that the co-curricular or ancillary programs (i.e., in addition to the classroom) should add vitality to the overall school program. By ‘vitality’ it is understood that the school has programs and activities which complement the classroom education and are conducive to the development of students as whole persons. There are four standards by which WCEA discerns the vitality of the co-curricular programs:

D.1 School Environment
The school provides an environment that is physically, personally, and academically safe for all students.

D.2 Academic Support
The school provides academic support services sufficient to meet the learning needs of all students.

D.3 Co-Curricular Programs
The school provides opportunities for students to engage in co-curricular activities — the arts, athletics, student government, clubs, etc. — that are conducive to their development as whole persons.

D.4 College Matriculation
The school provides support services that foster the college matriculation of students.

E. The Responsible Management — i.e., Stewardship — of Material Resources
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that the management of a school’s material resources ought to be carried out responsibly, for the well-being of others, i.e., primarily students. This ‘responsible management’ is stewardship. In the Catholic high school context, they who manage a school’s material assets or resources are stewards. They ought to do so in a spirit of care and accountability. There are seven standards by which WCEA discerns a school’s stewardship of material resources:

E.1 Enrollment Resources
The school’s enrollment operations are well conceived and well run, toward securing the student population that the school mission intends.

E.2 Classroom and Instructional Resources
The classroom and instructional resources are sufficient both in quality and in quantity for the school to deliver an excellent educational program.

E.3 Plant Resources
The school plant—facilities, buildings and grounds—is of such size and quality as to constitute a fit house for the school’s essential operations.

E.4 Funding Resources
The school’s funding sources and operations — tuition, annual events, and third-source income — are of such quality as to yield revenues sufficient at minimum to offset annual expenses. Three kinds of revenue-generating operations are included in this Standard: tuition (aka “first source” income), annual events (aka “second source” income), and all other revenue streams (aka “third-source” income).

E.5 Business Operations
The school’s business operations — budgeting, accounting, etc. — are sound as to planning, implementation, reporting, oversight and review.
E.6 Promotional Operations
The school’s promotional operations—public relations and marketing—effectively communicate school news and attract support for the school from within and beyond the school community.

E.7 Strategic Material Planning
The school exercises responsible material resource planning for its future.

F. The Commitment to Improvement
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a school ought to be committed to improvement, in whole and in parts. What is meant by ‘improvement’ begins in a school’s estimation of itself and its operations. ‘Improvement’ obliges a school to strive for a better fulfillment of its mission. There are three standards by which WCEA discerns a school’s commitment to improvement:

F.1 Conscientious implementation of the improvement plan from the prior accreditation (full visit).
Its improvement plan from the prior accreditation (full-visit)—a plan that may have included an additional growth area or two as identified by the WCEA Visiting Committee—was derived after systematic analysis of the data of school experience. This plan identified significant areas for improvement, constitutive action steps, acting agents, necessary resources, ways of assessing progress, ways of reporting progress, and a timeline for completion. This standard requires the school to conscientiously implement the previous plan. Each goal must have been addressed or the school must provide a clearly-articulated rationale to justify the decision not to implement a goal.

F.2 Ongoing improvement, planning and implementation between accreditation visits.
School improvement is an ongoing obligation. This standard requires the school to be continuously planning and implementing toward more effective operations.

F.3 Development of an improvement plan as a major outcome of a Self-Study.
The outcome of a Self-Study is an educational improvement plan that the school conceives, a plan that addresses all the vital areas wherein the school needs to grow. Each of these vital areas for growth ought to include these elements:
- identification of the vital growth area
- the goal of the growth plan for this area
- a rationale for the plan
- the constitutive action steps
- the acting agents
- necessary resources, including budgetary needs
- ways of assessing progress
- ways of reporting progress
- a timeline for completion.

According to this standard, these elements are required in the development of each major area that constitutes a school’s improvement plan.

G. The Integrity of the Process of a Self-Study
This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a school’s Self-Study process must demonstrate integrity — i.e., inclusivity, honesty, and thoroughness — throughout the whole of the process. There are three standards by which WCEA discerns the integrity of the process of a Self-Study:
G.1 The process is inclusive.
All members of the school community are involved in the process of the Self-Study, in a manner appropriate to each. The construction of the Self-Study itself is essentially the work of those who deliver the school’s educational mission — teachers, administrators, and support staff. Those who receive this education — students (with their parents) — must be heard (e.g., via surveys). Other constituent groups — governance bodies, alumni, benefactors, friends — should have an opportunity to provide input.

G.2 The process is honest.
The school’s educational program is openly studied, leading to an accurate, candid, and truthful assessment of its quality. The school endeavors to discern the truth of its operations — not only school strengths but also school weaknesses. The school which honestly views itself is in the best position to grow via an educational improvement plan.

G.3 The process is thorough.
The whole of the school’s educational program is studied. All aspects of school life — courses and co-curriculars, offices and operations, purposes and plans — are analyzed in the process of the Self-Study. Moreover, a Self-Study is not only about viewing and evaluating school life but also about improving this life. Thus an educational improvement plan is a major purpose of the process of the Self-Study.
SCHEMA FOR CONNECTING THE SCHOOL’S SELF-STUDY WITH THE VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

The following schema is provided to the Visiting Committee of WCEA. This schema depicts the practical connections between the parts of a school’s Self-Study and the seven principles (i.e., ‘A to G’) according to which the committee’s report is organized. This schema serves to answer the question ‘where should a Visiting Committee member to look within the school’s Self-Study report in order to glean the school’s observance of any given principle.’

Regarding Principle A: The Authenticity of the School’s Catholic Identity

See the Self-Study. . . .

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Regarding Principle B: The Organizational Efficacy of the School

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Regarding Principle C: The Excellence of the Teaching and Learning

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Regarding Principle D: The Vitality of Support Programs for Students

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Regarding Principle E: The Stewardship of Material Resources

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**Regarding Principle F: The Commitment to Improvement**

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**Regarding Principle G: The Integrity of the Process of the Self-Study**

*See the Self-Study.*

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<tr>
<td>Chapter IV</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Study Process</td>
<td>A, B, C</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
THE VISITING COMMITTEE PROCESS

Receiving Training

The Visiting Committee’s training is provided by WCEA leadership, several months in advance of the committee’s actual three-day visit to the school. This training begins with an overview of the Self-Study according to the E3 format as well as an overview of the Visiting Committee’s responsibilities which involve the completion of the forms in lieu of a lengthy narrative. As there is much that is in common between E3 and what has preceded it (i.e. FOL), the training concentrates on that which is new in E3.

See “New Features in the E3 Self-Study” on page 5 of this manual.

Becoming familiar with the E3 Format

Knowing the E3 format (i.e., the Self-Study process that a school experiences) is required for the successful work of a Visiting Committee. The committee members ought to have in hand Ensuring Educational Excellence at the time of its training.

Pages 3-5 in this manual are helpful for becoming familiar with E3 and with what a school has accomplished in its Self-Study.

Reading the School’s Self-Study

Upon receipt of the school’s Self-Study approximately a month in advance of the visit, the committee member reads this document thoroughly. Reading the Self-Study enables the member to begin to know the school, allows the member to accomplish specific tasks in advance of the visit, and gives them the opportunity to see how their individual work blends with the work of the total committee. The Visiting Committee member does NOT receive the Data Library prior to the visit. It is expected the Data Library will be reviewed during the visit.

Completing a Pre-writing Assignment (‘Pre’ refers to before the visit.)

Prior to the actual visit, the committee members receive their assignments from the committee chairperson. These assignments call for some “pre-writing.” Pre-writing amounts to a first draft of the committee’s report, a draft that is based solely on what the school itself has written in its Self-Study. The value of this pre-writing is two-fold for the Visiting Committee: it secures an understanding of what the school has done and brings focus to what must be explored at the visit.

The need to amend the pre-writing becomes clear at the time of the visit when the committee actually experiences the school.

The pre-writing assignment addresses the accreditation work in basic form. The Pre-writing requires a committee member to view school experience and to evaluate it according to the format that E3 specifies. The member accomplishes this work by completing forms related to each standard.

1. Understanding the accreditation principle in one’s assignment. (See the Seven Principles of WCEA Accreditation (pages 7-12 in this manual) and the Schema (pages 13-14) in order to appreciate the principles and to connect them with the school’s Self-Study.)
2. Beginning with the first of the standards that constitutes the principle and discerning whether or not the school’s experience signifies that the school has met the standard. Here, at the time of
pre-writing, the committee member is only able to infer attainment of a standard from what the school has written about itself. The member makes an educated guess as to this attainment. At the visit, when the member experiences the school actually (accessing the Data Library, witnessing classroom dynamics, viewing student work and school documents, and conducting interviews), the member is able to make an informed judgment about whether (and the degree to which) the school has met the standard;

3. **Discerning the degree to which the school has met the standard**, whether commendably or sufficiently.

   - If the discernment is “commendably” (as might be the case when the school declares a “key strength” in the area of experience that the standard covers), the key strength that is declared by the school is noted.
   - If the committee member records that there is an improvement plan in Chapter IV that has a bearing on the standard, the discernment that results is ‘sufficiently’ and the area for growth that is declared by the school is noted on the form.

4. **Recording (i.e., writing) what has been discerned** after using each standard to gauge the quality of school experience;

5. **Repeating the prior four steps for each standard** that constitutes the principle.

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There is a WCEA Visiting Committee form entitled “ATTAINMENT OF A STANDARD.” This form is to be used for written reporting about each standard that constitutes the accreditation principle for which the Visiting Committee member has responsibility. This form is for committee use and not for school viewing. (See Appendix A)

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At the time of the visit, when the Visiting Committee member experiences the school actually, the member will amend or refine his/her pre-writing. This amending follows from the member’s experiences of: viewing the Data Library, viewing student work, reading school documents, observing classroom dynamics, and interviewing school persons and groups. The sum of these experiences gives the member insights into the school actually, and these insights may conform or differ from what the member perceived from a reading of the school’s Self-Study prior to the visit. These insights do not alter the basic form of the member’s work—which is to make a reasonable judgment concerning whether and the degree to which a standard has been met. During the visit, the basic responsibility of the Visiting Committee work is achieved when the members move from judging the degree to which the standards are met to judging whether a principle is observed.

**Following a Schedule**

The Visiting Committee chairperson and the school develop a mutually agreeable schedule for the visit. The schedule is not different than the schedule that schools and chairpersons are accustomed to working out. There is time for classroom visiting, document viewing, interviewing, and committee meetings. Adequate time needs to be allocated for the committee’s familiarity with the school and access to the Data Library. Also, there may be a need to allot sufficient time for committee discussion and writing during the visit.
Visiting Classrooms

Classroom visits are an important experience for the Visiting Committee. The point of these visits is to experience the teaching and learning, to see the educational resources and facilities, and to view student work (i.e., papers, homework, tests, etc.).

How students are engaged is a major indicator of the learning taking place in the classroom.

Viewing Students’ Work

The need to view students’ work comes as a result of the committee’s responsibility to ascertain that curriculum content standards are realized as are the integral student outcomes (ISOs) that the school has declared. The committee may expect that criterion-based student work is to be found in the classrooms while standardized test results are to be found in the committee workroom.

Viewing School Documentation

What is meant by ‘documentation’ has to do with the Data Library and also includes all manner of school written matter: school handbooks. This documentation ought to be readily accessible to the Visiting Committee.

Interviewing

Interviewing Focus Groups:
The committee members conduct interviews with a minimum of seven focus groups (i.e., the school’s accreditation leadership group, one group for each of the first five “A to G” areas of accreditation principles, and a group of randomly selected students). Interview questions are drawn up by committee members in view of their need to understand school experience. These questions should not seek information that is otherwise available in the school’s Self-Study, especially its Data Library. Other focus groups may be interviewed as necessary (e.g., curriculum group, parent group, governance group, or support staff group).

Interviewing Individuals:
The significance of some positions within the school organization (for example, president and principal) requires that the person in the position be interviewed, especially regarding the school’s vital growth areas. Other individuals may be interviewed, as necessary, per the need of the Visiting Committee to understand school experience.

Informing the School’s Leadership Team

The Visiting Committee and the Leadership Team meet at the outset of each day to ensure a shared understanding of the day’s schedule. In addition to this formality, the morning meeting is the occasion for the chairperson of the committee to keep the school’s Leadership Team apprised of the committee’s progress over the course of the visit. From a regard for transparency, the kind of transparency that the school has demonstrated to the Visiting Committee in naming its areas for vital growth, the Visiting Committee recognizes its responsibility to inform the school of its progress throughout the visit. This responsibility to inform the school is particularly necessary when the Visiting Committee has begun to discern a key, if not vital, matter for school growth that the school did not include in its Self-Study. Moreover, should the Visiting Committee discern such matter, it is not enough merely to mention it to the school, the committee chairperson must communicate the matter completely (i.e., explaining the matter and the rationale for its discernment by the committee).
The written report of the Visiting Committee may not include growth areas discerned by the committee that have not been declared by the committee to the school in the context of the visit.

Sharing Perceptions within the Committee
It is important for the Visiting Committee members to spend sufficient time together during the visit in order to share perceptions of school experience. Telling each other what one has seen/heard/read/understood of school experience is a requirement of committee work, especially since ‘sharing perceptions’ is a necessary operation along the way of forming evaluative judgments concerning the quality of school experiences. There is all the more reason to share perceptions together in view of the obligation that committee members have to strive for consensus in their work.

Forming Evaluative Judgments
As was mentioned, forming evaluative judgments is the basic form of Visiting Committee work. These are judgments regarding whether (and the degree to which) the school has met a standard, which is a quality indicator concerning an area of school experience. This kind of judgment represents work that the Visiting Committee performs in its internal forum. There are also judgments regarding whether the school observes a principle, which is an integral rule of Catholic high school accreditation. This kind of judgment represents external forum work, since the judgments are manifest in the written report of the Visiting Committee. In either case the formation of such a judgment requires that there be material evidence in support of the judgment (rather like the requirement on the school to cite evidence from the Data Library in support of any identification of a key strength area or a key growth area). What is meant by ‘material evidence of a standard’ is explicit school experience that is inherently related to that standard. What is meant by ‘material evidence of a principle’ are judgments about the standards that are inherently related to that principle.

Knowing the Internal Forum and the External Forum
The first kind of judgment concerning standards being met (i.e., the standards that constitute a given principle) is a work that is internal to the Visiting Committee. Why internal to the committee? Why not public (i.e., external, written for the school’s viewing)? Because standards are elements or parts of principles. They lack integral accreditation meaning. There is no need for the committee to report to the school its findings about individual standards, since these findings about standards are steps along the way to discerning the school’s observance of comprehensive principles. The principles are the bottom line in WCEA accreditation work. Whether or not the school observes them is the end or outcome of Visiting Committee work. What the committee discerns concerning the principles of accreditation is what is reported in writing to the school by the WCEA Visiting Committee.

Determining whether Standards are met
Regarding its internal work (i.e., work done within the committee itself that is for the committee itself), the first time that a member uses the form “ATTAINMENT OF A STANDARD” is during the pre-writing phase of this work (see page 15). Use thereof is as follows:

Identification of the standard and its overarching principle;

1. Refer to the Schema (pages 13-14 in this manual) in order to locate the principle within school experience;
2. Viewing of Chapter III (i.e., A, B, C, D, or E) of the school’s Self-Study in order to identify any key strength or key growth that may be governed by the standard;
3. Viewing of Chapter IV of the Self-Study in order to identify any vital growth area that is governed by the standard;
4. Preliminary evaluative judgment whether the standard is met and, if met, indication of the degree to which it is met, whether sufficiently or commendably, with accompanying rationale that explains the reasons for the judgment.

These steps are repeated using a separate form for each of the standards that comprise the principle.

At the time of the visit, the member uses a new ATTAINMENT form for each standard. Use of a new form is required because the committee member is experiencing the school actually, including accessing the Data Library, visiting classrooms, and interviewing.

These completed ATTAINMENT forms are then at hand to the committee member when, at a later point in the visit, the committee begins the work of discerning whether an overarching principle is sufficiently observed.

All ATTAINMENT forms for each standard are retained by the committee chairperson for WCEA Commission overview, if necessary.

Discerning the School’s Observance of the Seven Principles

At a point approximately two-thirds into its visit, the Visiting Committee of WCEA comes to the major task of discerning whether the overarching principles of accreditation are observed by the school in the course of school experience.

Discernment of principles implies a comprehensive evaluative judgment that is equally science and art, ‘science’ because of what is at hand materially by way of ATTAINMENT forms and ‘art’ because of the insight that is involved in grasping a whole (i.e., observance of a principle) from a viewing of the parts (i.e., the attainment of discrete standards). The nature of this discernment as ‘art’ is also suggested by the ethical imperative on the committee to provide an honest and respectful evaluation of the school’s analysis of the educational improvement plan.

Discernment of the observance of a principle by the Visiting Committee is accomplished according to the following steps:

1. Completed ATTAINMENT forms (i.e., one for each standard) are at hand;
2. The seven principles of WCEA accreditation are at hand. (See pg. 8-9 in this manual.);
3. The school’s Self-Study is at hand, as are the Data Library and the E3 Process forms;
4. There is a commitment to working toward consensus among the committee members;
5. The ATTAINMENT forms are gathered and grouped in relationship to the principles of WCEA accreditation. So, for example, there are eight ATTAINMENT forms in relationship to ‘authentic Catholic identity’, five such forms regarding ‘Organization efficacy’, four regarding the ‘Excellence of Teaching and Learning’, etc.;
6. For each principle, a tally of the ATTAINMENT forms that constitute the principle is taken (i.e., a tally of the number of them that indicate observance of a standard), leading to a first impression
concerning observance of the principle. Then a substantive viewing of each standard takes place (i.e., what is written on each ATTAINMENT form is studied).

- If the tally shows that a majority of the standards that relate to the principle are attained (or met), then it can be inferred that the overarching principle is observed.
- If the tally reveals a tie between the number of standards that are met and the number that are not met, then it cannot be inferred from this first impression that the principle is observed.
- If the tally reveals that a majority of the standards are not met, then it can be inferred that the overarching principle is not observed by the school.

In any case, a viewing of the rationale attached to each standard is required along the way toward a summary discernment about the school’s observance of a principle.

7. The work in #6 leads a Visiting Committee to an evaluative discernment concerning the school’s observance of a principle. This is the moment when the Visiting Committee perceives whether, from a thorough consideration of the standards, a whole has been achieved. What is meant by ‘whole’ is the school’s observance of a principle. This discernment represents the Visiting Committee’s summary judgment concerning the school’s observance of a principle, a summary judgment that forms an essential part of the committee’s written report of findings.

These steps are repeated for each of the seven principles of WCEA accreditation.

Reviewing a School’s Educational Improvement Plan

In its work of discernment, the Visiting Committee pays particular attention to a school’s Educational Improvement Plan (EIP). A school self-improvement is a salient feature of accreditation; the EIP of any school is presumed by a Visiting Committee to be honest, accurate, and thorough. Standard F.3 calls the school to construct just such an EIP. Of course, the point of having a Visiting Committee is to view and evaluate the EIP that the school has constructed in order to ensure that this EIP is objectively aligned. This viewing and evaluating can lead a Visiting Committee to accept the EIP as is, to suggest amendments of its details or to identify some key areas for growth not recognized by the school that the committee deems necessary for inclusion in the EIP. In summary, the Visiting Committee is acting to ensure that the areas for vital growth of the school are being addressed by the school.

In adding to a school’s EIP, the Visiting Committee does so with all honesty and respect. The seriousness of such additions requires that the Visiting Committee go to reasonable lengths to explain what is being added and why it is being added, as well as to identify the school’s capacity to accomplish what is added. It is not sufficient for a Visiting Committee simply to name some changes—especially substantive changes—and to expect a school to understand, accept, and assimilate these changes into its EIP. The Visiting Committee must—in its report of findings—work with the school in order to facilitate improvement.

To satisfy these EIP-related obligations of the Visiting Committee the committee is required to complete a form for each improvement plan that the school has declared in its EIP. This form is entitled “EIP Form.” (See Appendix C.) In completing this form, the Visiting Committee declares whether each plan is acceptable as is or whether each plan needs to be changed. Should the Visiting Committee discern the
school’s need for improvement in some area that the school itself has not identified, this discernment needs to be recorded on an EIP Form.

**Writing the Report of Findings**

The report of the Visiting Committee is organized according to an Introduction and seven sections. In the Introduction, the Visiting Committee reproduces pertinent matter from the school’s introduction to its Self-Study and adds some more matter. *What is reproduced is that which identifies the school. What is added is that which identifies the Visiting Committee.* In the seven sections, the Visiting Committee reports its findings about each of the seven principles of WCEA accreditation. The following is an outline of the format for the report of the Visiting Committee:

- **Introduction**
  - School’s Observance of Principle A: Authentic Catholic Identity
  - School’s Observance of Principle B: Organizational Efficacy
  - School’s Observance of Principle C: Excellence of Teaching and Learning
  - School’s Observance of Principle D: Vitality of the Support Programs
  - School’s Observance of Principle E: Stewardship of Material Resources
  - School’s Observance of Principle F: Commitment to Improvement
  - School’s Observance of Principle G: Integrity of Self-Study Process.

In each of the seven sections of its report of findings, the Visiting Committee

1. identifies the principle at hand;
2. discerns whether the principle is observed by means of a viewing of the completed forms entitled “Attainment of a Standard.” This discernment must be a careful one, especially when a particular principle (i.e., A – E) is involved in the Educational Improvement Plan that the school has developed or is involved in what the Visiting Committee has recommended to the school’s Educational Improvement Plan;
3. includes a written rationale for its discernment, providing citations from the Data Library as pertinent and providing other evidence in support of its discernment.

**There is a form that is provided for communicating this discernment and corresponding rationale. The form is entitled “Observance of a Principle.”** Practically speaking, to complete this form is to complete a section. Completion of the entire report of the Visiting Committee entails completion of seven forms, one for each of the seven principles. *(See Appendix B.)* The form is basically the same for each of the seven principles. This part of the form connects the principle to the Educational Improvement Plan. This part is reserved for principles A – E, and looks as follows:

- This Principle is involved in the School’s Educational Improvement Plan (EIP), via Standard/s: _______.
- This Principle is involved in what the Visiting Committee has added to the School’s EIP via Standard/s: _______.
- This Principle is NOT involved in the School’s EIP.
Principles F ("Commitment to Improvement") and G ("Integrity of the Self-Study Process") contain only two sections for completion and do not include the box above.

It is estimated that each of the seven sections of the Visiting Committee report will require no more than two pages of written copy. This writing takes place during the visit, there is need for an allotment of sufficient time within which to do the writing. This sufficient time is normally scheduled in the late afternoon and/or early evening of the second full day of the visit.

Completing the Draft of the Report
Completing the draft of the report is primarily the work of the chairperson of the Visiting Committee. This work entails organizing the sections of the report that the members have written—each of which has to do with the school’s observance of a principle of accreditation—and then checking for consistency of content throughout the sections of the draft, with particular attention given to the connection between each section and “F.3 Development of an improvement plan as the major outcome of the Self-Study” and page 19, “Reviewing a School’s EIP.” It is critically important for the Visiting Committee chairperson to understand and communicate to the Visiting Committee the significance of the moment that is at hand with the Educational Improvement Plan, for three reasons: the EIP of the school is charged with meaning since it is the ultimate result of an 18-month period of intense work by the school; it is of major significance for the Visiting Committee to make any change to the school’s EIP; and the committee’s changes to the school’s EIP figure substantially in the accreditation recommendation that goes forward from the Visiting Committee to the WCEA Commission.

Giving the Draft to the School
At approximately mid or late morning on the third full day of the visit, the chairperson gives the draft report to the school. The school reads the draft, and then meets with the committee to respond to the draft. This school response takes any of three forms: (the school may)

- point out to the Visiting Committee any factual errors in the draft
- seek a clarification regarding a matter within the draft that is not clearly written or is not sufficiently understood by the school
- request a change in substance regarding something that the committee has written (after giving reason/s for the request).

At that meeting, the first two kinds of school responses can be mutually resolved by the committee and the school (with the chairperson of the committee as spokesperson for the committee). The third kind of response (the school’s request for a particular change in the substance of what the committee has written) is a request that the committee willingly receives without feeling any obligation to change the matter on the spot. The fact that the request has to do with what is substantive usually requires the Visiting Committee to deliberate about the matter, in an internal forum. The outcome of this deliberation could be that the matter stands as written. Conversely, the outcome could be that the report is changed. But in either case, there is wisdom in moving the request into the internal forum because of the freedom that is needed for responsible deliberation by the committee.
Finishing the Report

When the committee has made objective sense of the school’s responses to the written draft, the committee amends the draft as needed and thus arrives at the finished report. The committee will print the report and deliver it to the school leaders in the context of a final meeting with the school community.

Making a Recommendation to the WCEA Commission regarding the Accreditation of the School

Toward the end of the WCEA Visiting Committee’s work, there is an obligation on the committee to make a recommendation to the WCEA Commission concerning the accreditation of the school. This recommendation takes one of four forms:

Accreditation with annual reports: These are annual reports over the remainder of the accreditation cycle. They are given to the local WCEA Commissioner who shares these reports with the WCEA Commission.

Accreditation with a Revisit/Report: This recommendation entails a one-and-a-half-day visit by a two-person WCEA committee at the mid-point of the accreditation cycle (third year).

Probation: One-Year Accreditation Status requiring an in-depth progress report and a one-day revisit at the end of the following year of the accreditation cycle. The two-member Revisit Committee is appointed by the WCEA Elementary Commissioner and the WCEA Executive Director in consultation with any partner agencies.

Denial of Accreditation: WCEA requires the accreditation process to be honest, thorough, and inclusive. If there is evidence of a serious breach of protocol compromising the integrity of this accreditation process, the Visiting Committee can recommend Denial of Accreditation. This recommendation requires consultation with the WCEA Commissioner and the WCEA Executive Director. The WCEA Executive Director will consult with any partner agencies.

In choosing between the recommendations, the WCEA Visiting Committee should especially weigh the nature of the changes that the committee made to the school’s Educational Improvement Plan (EIP). Once the choice of a recommendation is made, reflecting the consensus of the committee, the work of the committee at the school is complete. Finally, unlike the report that the committee prepares, this recommendation is not made known to the school; it is communicated to the WCEA Commission, with an accompanying rationale. The final decision is with the WCEA Commission.
Accreditation Status Recommendation

Click/tap here  
WCEA School Code
(S999 or K999)

Click/tap here  
School Name

Click/tap here  
School Street Address, City, State, Zip

Click/tap here  
Arch/Diocese

Click/tap here  
dates of full visit

Please note: Final determination of Accreditation Status is determined by the WCEA Commission

☐ Accreditation with Annual Reports
Six-Year Accreditation Status with a required Annual Report to the WCEA Secondary Commissioner.

☐ Accreditation with Revisit/Report
Six-Year Accreditation Status with a required Annual Report to the WCEA Secondary Commissioner and a third-year revisit and report.

☐ Probation
One-Year Accreditation Status requiring an in-depth progress report and a one-day revisit at the end of the following year of the accreditation cycle. The two-member Revisit Committee is appointed by the WCEA Elementary Commissioner and the WCEA Executive Director in consultation with any partner agencies.

☐ Denial of Accreditation
WCEA requires the accreditation process to be honest, thorough, and inclusive. If there is evidence of a serious breach of protocol compromising the integrity of this accreditation process, the Visiting Committee can recommend Denial of Accreditation. This recommendation requires consultation with the WCEA Commissioner and the WCEA Executive Director. The WCEA Executive Director will consult with any partner agencies.
Justification for the Recommendation of the Accreditation Status

School Name here  WCEA School Code here

I. The Quantitative Ratings concerning the Seven Principles of WCEA Accreditation are:

Click A. Observance of the Principle of Authentic Catholic Identity
Click B. Observance of the Principle of Organizational Efficacy
Click C. Observance of the Principle of Teaching and Learning Excellence
Click D. Observance of the Principle of Vitality of Student Support Programs
Click E. Observance of the Principle of Stewardship of Material Resources
Click F. Observance of the Principle of Educational Improvement
Click G. Observance of the Principle of Integrity of the Self Study Process

Note: The quantitative rating scale for each principle ranges from a low of 1 to a high of 7. These are whole numbers only and determined by a collaborative process based on the E3 Standards Rubrics.

II. Average of the Quantitative Ratings of the Seven Principles

Click

III. Narrative

Important: There is no longer a specific average of quantitative ratings that determine the recommendation of status. In general, a rating of 2.5 or below for any of the seven principles might indicate the need for a revisit in the third year of the accreditation cycle. In addition, the Visiting Committee might determine that a revisit is recommended due to the needs of the school in relationship to its Educational Improvement Plan. Please provide a complete narrative (1-3 paragraphs) that summarizes the Visiting Committee’s rationale for the status recommended. Please include the following:

- Reasons for the recommended status
- The strength of the school in relation to the E3 Standards and Principles
- The adequacy of the EIP to meet the school’s critical areas of growth
- The capacity of the school to implement and monitor the EIP

Click/tap here to enter text
Visiting Committee Accreditation Status and Justification Statement Signatures
School Name here  WCEA School Code here

Chair Information
Chair name here
Cell: Cell number here  Work: Work number here
School (include name) address or home address here

All Signatures are Required

Click or tap here
Chair Name

Click or tap here
Member Name

Click or tap here
Member Name

Click or tap here
Member Name

Click or tap here
Member Name

Click or tap here
Name here

Click or tap here
Name here

Chair Name

Chair Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature
ATTAINMENT OF A STANDARD Form

Regarding Standards that constitute Principles A - E
[For use internal to the Visiting Committee. Reproduce this form as needed.]

******************************************************************************

Identification Symbol of the Standard: Fill in
The Standard Itself: Fill in
The Principle to which the Standard is attached (abbreviated form thereof): Fill in

FOR STANDARDS THAT ARE RELATED TO PRINCIPLES A – E:

☐ This standard is involved in the School's Educational Improvement Plan (EIP)
☐ This standard is involved in what the Visiting Committee has added to the School’s EIP
☐ This standard is not explicitly involved in the school’s EIP or in the VC’s additions thereto

Evaluative Judgment concerning the School’s Attainment of the Standard:

☐ The School attains the Standard:

To this extent: ☐ Commendably ☐ Sufficiently

☐ The School does not sufficiently attain the Standard.

Rationale for this Evaluative Judgment

Directions: Provide a brief rationale for the evaluative judgment of the Visiting Committee concerning the School’s attainment of this Standard. Include citations from the Data Library.
APPENDIX B

OBSERVANCE of the PRINCIPLE of AUTHENTIC CATHOLIC IDENTITY (p. 1 of 3)

[Completion of the forms in this Appendix comprises the essential written matter of the VC’s Report.]

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Principle: THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE SCHOOL’S CATHOLIC IDENTITY (A)

This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a school’s Catholic identity ought to be authentic. Here, ‘authenticity’ means that, in all its understandings and operations, the school is oriented toward God; the teachings of the Catholic church; and the rites, rituals and practices of the Catholic faith. This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a school’s Catholic identity ought to be authentic. Here, ‘authentic’ means that in all its understandings and operations, the school is oriented toward.

Standard that Constitutes this Principle: Fill in

☐ This Principle is involved in the School’s Educational Improvement Plan (EIP), via Standard/s: Fill in

☐ This Principle is involved in what the Visiting Committee has added to the School’s EIP, via Standard/s: Fill in

☐ This Principle is NOT involved in the School’s EIP.

VISITING COMMITTEE’S DISCERNMENT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL’S OBSERVANCE OF PRINCIPLE A:

☐ This principle of WCEA accreditation is observed by the school

Degree of its Observance:

☐ Commendably

☐ Sufficiently

☐ This principle of WCEA Accreditation is not observed by the school

OBSERVANCE of a PRINCIPLE Form (p. 2 of 3)

******************************************************************************

Rationale for the Discernment of Principle Fill In

Directions: Include a rationale for the discernment of the Visiting Committee concerning the observance of this Principle. This rationale ought to be informed by the Committee’s prior discernments concerning the discrete standards that constitute this Principle. Do not exceed two pages.
APPENDIX B

OBSERVANCE of the PRINCIPLE of SCHOOL’S ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICACY (p. 1 of 3)

This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a Catholic school ought to be systematically and carefully organized and effectively managed.

Standard that Constitutes this Principle: Fill in

☐ This Principle is involved in the School’s Educational Improvement Plan (EIP), via Standard/s: Fill in

☐ This Principle is involved in what the Visiting Committee has added to the School’s EIP, via Standard/s: Fill in

☐ This Principle is NOT involved in the School’s EIP.

VISITING COMMITTEE’S DISCERNMENT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL’S OBSERVANCE OF PRINCIPLE B:

☐ This principle of WCEA accreditation is observed by the school

Degree of its Observance: ☐ Commendably ☐ Sufficiently

☐ This principle of WCEA Accreditation is not observed by the school
APPENDIX B

OBSERVANCE of the PRINCIPLE of THE EXCELLENCE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING
(p. 1 of 3)

*****************************************************************************
************

Principle: THE EXCELLENCE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING (C)

This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that the school’s teaching and learning ought to be of the highest quality. Here, ‘teaching and learning’ refers to the classroom context and dynamic. By ‘excellence’ or ‘highest quality’ is meant that an exemplary curriculum is delivered and the maximum learning capacity of each student is realized.

Standard that Constitutes this Principle: Fill In

☐ This Principle is involved in the School’s Educational Improvement Plan (EIP), via Standard/s: Fill in

☐ This Principle is involved in what the Visiting Committee has added to the School’s EIP, via Standard/s: Fill in

☐ This Principle is NOT involved in the School’s EIP.

VISITING COMMITTEE’S DISCERNMENT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL’S OBSERVANCE OF PRINCIPLE C:

☐ This principle of WCEA accreditation is observed by the school

Degree of its Observance: ☐ Commendably ☐ Sufficiently

☐ This principle of WCEA Accreditation is not observed by the school
APPENDIX B

OBSERVANCE of the PRINCIPLE of THE VITALITY OF CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS (p. 1 of 3)

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Principle:  THE VITALITY OF THE CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS (D)

This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that the co-curricular or ancillary programs (i.e., in addition to the classroom) should add vitality to the overall school program. By ‘vitality’ it is understood that the school has programs and activities which complement the classroom education and are conducive to the development of students as whole persons.

Standard that Constitutes this Principle: Fill in

☐ This Principle is involved in the School’s Educational Improvement Plan (EIP), via Standard/s: Fill in

☐ This Principle is involved in what the Visiting Committee has added to the School’s EIP, via Standard/s: Fill in

☐ This Principle is NOT involved in the School’s EIP.

VISITING COMMITTEE’S DISCERNMENT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL’S OBSERVANCE OF PRINCIPLE D:

☐ This principle of WCEA accreditation is observed by the school

Degree of its Observance: ☐ Commendably ☐ Sufficiently

☐ This principle of WCEA Accreditation is not observed by the school
APPENDIX B
OBSERVANCE of the PRINCIPLE of THE STEWARDSHIP OF MATERIAL RESOURCES (p. 1 of 3)

Principle: THE STEWARDSHIP OF MATERIAL RESOURCES (E)

This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that the management of a school’s material resources ought to be carried out responsibly, for the well-being of others, i.e., primarily students. This ‘responsible management’ is stewardship. In the Catholic high school context, they who manage a school’s material assets or resources are stewards. They ought to do so in a spirit of care and accountability.

Standard that Constitutes this Principle: Fill in

☐ This Principle is involved in the School’s Educational Improvement Plan (EIP), via Standard/s: Fill in

☐ This Principle is involved in what the Visiting Committee has added to the School’s EIP, via Standard/s: Fill in

☐ This Principle is NOT involved in the School’s EIP.

VISITING COMMITTEE’S DISCERNMENT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL’S OBSERVANCE OF PRINCIPLE E:

☐ This principle of WCEA accreditation is observed by the school

Degree of its Observance: ☐ Commendably ☐ Sufficiently

☐ This principle of WCEA Accreditation is not observed by the school
APPENDIX B

OBSERVANCE of the PRINCIPLE of COMMITMENT TO IMPROVEMENT (p. 1 of 3)

Principle: THE COMMITMENT TO IMPROVEMENT (F)

This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a school ought to be committed to improvement, in whole and in parts. What is meant by ‘improvement’ begins in a school’s estimation of itself and its operations. ‘Improvement’ requires a school to strive for a better fulfillment of its mission.

Standard that Constitutes this Principle: Fill in

VISITING COMMITTEE’S DISCERNMENT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL’S OBSERVANCE OF PRINCIPLE F:

☐ This principle of WCEA accreditation is observed by the school

Degree of its Observance: ☐ Commendably ☐ Sufficiently

☐ This principle of WCEA Accreditation is not observed by the school
APPENDIX B
OBSERVANCE of the PRINCIPLE of THE INTEGRITY OF THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS
(p. 1 of 3)

Principle: THE INTEGRITY OF THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS (G)

The Integrity of the Process of a Self-Study

This principle of WCEA accreditation holds that a school’s Self-Study process must demonstrate integrity — i.e., inclusivity, honesty, and thoroughness — throughout the whole of the process.

Standard that Constitutes this Principle: Fill in

VISITING COMMITTEE’S DISCERNMENT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL’S OBSERVANCE OF PRINCIPLE G:

☐ This principle of WCEA accreditation is observed by the school

Degree of its Observance: ☐ Commendably ☐ Sufficiently

☐ This principle of WCEA Accreditation is not observed by the school
APPENDIX C

EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN Form (EIP Form)

[To be completed for each improvement plan that the school conceives as part of its overall EIP and for any plan that the Visiting Committee envisions as requisite . . and included in the VC Report]

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☐ This EIP Form is being used for an improvement plan that the School has conceived.

☐ This EIP Form is being used for an improvement plan that the Visiting Committee has discerned.

Identification of the Improvement Plan:

(To be completed FOR AN IMPROVEMENT PLAN THAT THE SCHOOL HAS CONCEIVED)

☐ This Improvement Plan is acceptable as is to the Visiting Committee (VC).

☐ This Improvement Plan needs to be changed:

   ☐ In select details
   ☐ In substance

The following questions must be answered IF this Improvement Plan needs to be changed:

1. What is the nature of the change?

2. What is the reason for this change?

3. Does the school have the capacity to implement the change?
APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF DIRECTIONS regarding VISITING COMMITTEE’S WRITTEN REPORT

This summary contains a digest of what goes into the writing of the Visiting Committee report.

Keep in mind that the format for this report includes an introduction and seven sections [See p. 7], which correspond to the seven principles of WCEA high school accreditation. [See p. 8.]

1. The first piece of writing that a Visiting Committee member accomplishes is pre-writing. Pre-writing has to do with the accreditation principle that is assigned to the member by the chairperson. [See the SCHEMA on pp.14-15, in order to connect a principle with its location in the Self-Study that the school has written. See also “Completing a Pre-Writing Assignment” on pp. 16-17.] In pre-writing, the Visiting Committee member uses the form “ATTAINMENT OF A STANDARD,” completing a separate form for each of the standards that constitute the principle for which s/he has responsibility. This form is first drafted at the pre-writing and then is finalized at the visit after the member has accessed the Data Library, conducted an interview, and otherwise experienced the school actually. [See “Determining whether Standards are met” on p. 20. See also ATTAINMENT OF A STANDARD Form in Appendix A.]

2. The Visiting Committee writing that constitutes the Introduction basically reproduces pertinent matter from the school’s introduction to its Self-Study and adds some more matter. What is reproduced is that which identifies the school. What is added is that which identifies the Visiting Committee. Of special interest is “O” (i.e., “Most Significant School Developments since the Last Self-Study”).

3. Having in hand the completed forms that have to do with the attainment of standards, the Visiting Committee uses these forms to write its report. Essentially, writing the report consists of completing the form entitled “Observance of a Principle” for each of the seven principles of WCEA high school accreditation. [See “Discerning the School’s Observance of the Seven Principles” on p. 21. See also Appendix B.]

4. The written report will also contain an EIP form that must be completed must be completed for each improvement plan that the school has constructed and for any improvement plan the need for which has been discerned by the Visiting Committee in the course of its work at the school. [See “Reviewing a School’s Educational Improvement Plan” on p.22. See also Appendix C.]

To reiterate, the actual written report of the Visiting Committee consists of completing the forms that are specified in Appendix B and Appendix C.
APPENDIX E

GRAPHICS THAT DEPICT THE ACCREDITATION STATUS OF A SCHOOL

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1. ACCREDITATION with ANNUAL REPORTS

2. ACCREDITATION with REVISIT/REPORT

3. PROBATION (following the Revisit)

4. DENIAL OF ACCREDITATION