WASC Supplement for Online Programs/Courses

Designed primarily for joint WASC accreditation processes

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Introduction

The Accrediting Commission for Schools of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) has created this *WASC Online Program/Course Supplement* for the WASC-affiliated accreditation agencies that use their own protocol for accreditation and do not have specific criteria for online programs/courses.[*]

It is expected that schools that are either primarily online or those that offer blended programs with both traditional on-site classes and online options will complete the WASC Online Programs/Courses Report and attach it to their accreditation report in preparation of the joint accreditation visit.

Schools should respond to all questions in a narrative format to provide the Visiting Committee with the information it needs to review the school's online component. A template for the report is available and can be obtained from the WASC office.

WASC Report for Online Programs/Courses

Schools should respond to all questions in a narrative format.

1. **Online School Program and Course Description**

   a. Provide a succinct summary of all types of online instruction and specialized programs offered, such as IB Diploma Program, college/career readiness programs (CTE, academies, Pathways), school/college partnerships, AVID, GATE, independent study, and other alternative education programs.

   b. For each program listed, provide data that demonstrates the impact on student learning. Incorporate the disaggregation of selected data based on the separate program provided: enrollment, achievement completion rate, etc. NOTE: Some of this data may be referenced as part of schoolwide data.

2. **Online Instruction Description**

   Describe the school's online programs/courses as follows:

   a. Types of online instruction
   b. Learning management system
   c. Hardware and software requirements
   d. Teacher and support staff qualifications
   e. Personnel involved in the instructional process
   f. Curriculum offered both on-site or outsourced

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[*]This supplement is not an appropriate for stand-alone PSPs or individual students in the home school environment.

g. Types of instruction offered, synchronous or asynchronous

h. Methods and processes used to ensure that all students have access to the instructional programs necessary for learning success

i. Types of assessment and assessment processes

j. School culture for online environment, including types of school and community activities, opportunities for student involvement, participation data

k. Orientation process for incoming students and parents to understand expectations for the online learning environment

l. Student/teacher interaction on a typical day

m. Student support services, including response to intervention (RTI), academic counseling and support for equal access, personal counseling, college/career preparation support, and health services.

3. Schoolwide Learner Outcomes

Select two of the school's Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (SLOs) and describe to what extent their online programs/courses are connected to the SLOs and are being achieved in the online environment.

Based upon the available data in the accreditation report, comment on the degree to which the students are achieving the identified schoolwide learner outcomes within the online environment?

4. Organization for Student Learning Online Instruction Prompts

Schools should respond to the following online instruction prompts and describe in narrative style to what extent the school meets or exceeds WASC expectations.

a. Relationship of Policies

Indicator: The governing authority's policies are directly connected to the school's vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate the policies related to online instruction for effectiveness in clarifying the vision for the school's use of various types of online curriculum, instruction and support methodologies; this includes, upgrading or updating technology, acceptable use policies, CIPA policies, and policies to ensure internet safety.*

b. Staff Actions/Accountability to Support Learning

Indicator: The school evaluates the effectiveness of the processes and procedures for involving staff in shared responsibility, actions, and accountability to support student learning throughout all programs. This includes an evaluation of the collegial strategies used to implement innovations and encourage improvement, such as shadowing, coaching, observation, mentoring, group presentations.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate the processes and procedures for involving online staff members in professional development activities that enhance the use of technology in the delivery of instruction and support student learning.*

c. Supervision and Evaluation

Indicator: The school implements effective supervision and evaluation procedures in order to promote professional growth of staff.

Online Instruction Prompt: *How effective are the school's supervision and evaluation procedures in order to promote professional growth of online instructional staff, including their technological competencies and use of technology within the curriculum, and their fulfilling requirements for quality student-teacher interaction?*

d. Modifications Based on Assessment Results

Indicator: The school uses assessment results to make changes in the school program, professional development activities, and resource allocations demonstrating a results-driven continuous process.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Examine examples and comment on the overall effectiveness of changes in the online opportunities, professional development of the staff, and the resource allocations to support student achievement and their needs.*

5. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Online Instruction Prompts

Schools should respond to the following online instruction prompts and describe in narrative style to what extent it meets or exceeds WASC expectations.

a. Academic Standards for Each Area

Indicator: The school provides a comprehensive and sequential documented curriculum that is articulated within and across grade levels for the improvement of programs, learning, and teaching.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate the extent to which the online curriculum/courses consistently meet state academic standards. Determine if there is effective integration of outsourced curriculum into the program.*

b. Accessibility of All Students to Curriculum

Indicator: A rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum to all students is accessible to all students through all courses/programs offered. The school examines the demographics and situation of students throughout the class offerings. The school's instructional practices and other activities facilitate access and success for special needs students.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate the procedures to ensure that students have access to courses that meet the UC "a-g" requirements, including lab courses, if applicable.*

c. **Policies — Rigorous, Relevant, Coherent Curriculum**

Indicator: The school assesses the curriculum and its rigor, relevancy, and coherency after examination of policies regarding course completion, credits, grading policies, homework, use of technology, etc.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Determine the effectiveness of the school's policy for outsourced curriculum to maintain curricular integrity, reliability, and security.*

d. **Research-based Knowledge**

Indicator: The administrators and teachers use a variety of approaches to remain current in research-based professional knowledge and apply the knowledge to improve teaching and learning. All students regardless of background and ability are actively involved in the learning that is based on the schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate how teacher technology competencies are assessed during online instruction.*

e. **Challenging and Varied Instructional Strategies**

Indicator: The teachers strengthen student understanding and achievement of the learning outcomes through the use of a variety of instructional strategies that are selected on the basis of the learning purpose(s) and effectively engage students at a high level of learning. This includes the integration of multimedia and technology as appropriate.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate the processes and the effectiveness of the strategies used by teachers to make decisions on learning and teaching approaches including direct instruction, and other student-teacher interaction opportunities. Evaluate the effectiveness of timelines and pacing guides for completing coursework for asynchronous online instruction.*

f. **Evidence of Results based upon Challenging Learning Experiences**

Indicator: Students working and their work demonstrate critical and creative thinking, problem solving, knowledge attainment, and application skills.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate and comment on the effectiveness of reviewing student work online and online communications to determine the degree to which students are analyzing, comprehending and conducting effective research.*

g. **Student Use of Resources**

Indicator: Students use resources for learning beyond the limits of the textbook such as effective use of collaborative activities, technology, library/media resources and community resources.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate the effectiveness of opportunities within online instruction for real world experiences and applications for the students.*

h. **Basis for Determination of Performance Levels**

Indicator: The school staff has determined the basis upon which students' grades and their growth and performance levels are determined and uses that information to strengthen high achievement of all students.

Online Instruction Prompts: *Evaluate the effectiveness for determining if a student is prepared to advance to the next unit, course, or grade level. Evaluate how course mastery is determined and evaluate the "steps" or "gates" that are in place to prevent students from proceeding to the next unit if mastery has not been demonstrated.*

Evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures for grading student work whether it is done electronically or individually by the teachers.

Evaluate how effective teachers ensure academic integrity and determine students are doing their own work in the online environment. Comment on the degree to which the results for state-mandated assessments and the high school exit exam are used in decisions about student achievement and advancement and improving the instructional program.

i. **Demonstration of Student Achievement**

Indicator: A range of examples of student work and other assessments demonstrate student achievement of the academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes, including those with special needs.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate the use of student work and other online assessments (formative and summative) that demonstrate student achievement of academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes.*

6. Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth Online Instruction Prompts

Schools should respond to the following online instruction prompts and describe in narrative style to what extent it meets or exceeds WASC expectations.

a. **Adequate Personalized Support**

Indicator: The school has available adequate services, including referral services, to support all students in such areas as health, career and personal counseling, and academic assistance.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Comment on the availability and adequacy of the academic counseling, college preparation support, personal counseling, and health services provided for the students involved in online instruction.*

b. **Strategies Used for Student Growth/Development.**

Indicator: Strategies are used by the school leadership and staff to develop personalized approaches to learning and alternative instructional options which allow access to and progress in the rigorous standards-based curriculum. Examples of strategies include: level of teacher involvement with all students, a curriculum that promotes inclusion, processes for regular review of student and schoolwide profiles, and processes and procedures for interventions that address retention and redirection.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Provide evidence that the processes and strategies are effective for incoming students with regard to orientation or induction and the ongoing monitoring and support of the students to ensure all have a full opportunity for academic success.*

   c. **Support Services and Learning**

Indicator: The school leadership and staff ensure that the support services and related activities have a direct relationship to student involvement in learning, e.g., within and outside the classroom, for all students.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate the extent to which the support services and related activities have a direct relationship to student involvement in learning with respect to equity of access, availability of computers and internet.*

   d. **Co-Curricular Activities**

Indicator: School leadership and staff link curricular and co-curricular activities to the academic standards and schoolwide learner outcomes.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate the school's processes to address the needs of socialization for the students and involvement in the school.*

   e. **Student Involvement in Curricular/Co-Curricular Activities**

Indicator: The school has an effective process for regularly evaluating the level of student involvement in curricular/co-curricular activities and student use of support services.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Provide evidence about the effectiveness of the students' involvement in school and community activities, such as clubs, yearbook, newsletter, newspaper, field trips, volunteer work, service projects, college courses, etc.*

   f. **Parent/Community and Student Achievement**

Indicator: The school ensures that the parents and school community understand student achievement of the academic standards/schoolwide learner outcomes through the curricular/co-curricular program.

Online Instruction Prompt: *Evaluate the school's processes to ensure that parents understand the expectations for the online instruction in relation to the desired student achievement and to review and counsel families for whom the selected online instruction format may not be the best match.*

Report Submission Information

Please attach the completed WASC Report for Online Programs/Courses to the school's accreditation report. The specific information provided regarding the online programs/courses will allow the accreditation visiting committee to review the online learning component as part of the entire school review.

If you have specific questions related to this *WASC Online Supplement*, please contact the WASC office in Burlingame at 650 696-1060 or in Temecula at 951 693-2550.