

WASC Words 2013-2014

Education for globalization should aim to educate the whole child for the whole world.

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Western Association of Schools and Colleges
ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS

WASC Mission

WASC advances and validates quality ongoing school improvement by supporting its private and public elementary, secondary, and postsecondary member institutions to engage in a rigorous and relevant self-evaluation and peer review process that focuses on student learning.

WASC Philosophy

The Commission believes that the goal of any school should be to provide for successful student learning. Programs encompassing both the cognitive and affective components of learning should foster human growth and development and enable students to become responsible, productive members of the school community and our democratic society. Each school should develop a school purpose to reflect its beliefs. For ongoing program improvement, each school should engage in objective and subjective internal and external evaluations to assess progress in achieving its purpose.

WASC Territory

The Commission extends its services primarily to public and private schools located in California, Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and to American and international schools in Asia and the Pacific. The WASC Commission has authorized staff to work with schools in areas of the Middle East, Africa, and Europe when invited and when circumstances suggest relationships between WASC and those schools are both feasible and appropriate.



Thoughts from the Chair

Valene Staley, Ed.D. | Chairperson, Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC



The 2013–2014 school year brings challenges and opportunities to schools. The transition to Common Core State Standards, state and federal accountability, college and career readiness, assessments requiring higher level thinking skills, and changing funding formulas

will be major tasks for public schools. Expanding parent and student expectations regarding options for online learning, independent study, career-focused curriculum, project-based instruction, global perspectives, character development, and technology will be faced by all schools. Educators rightfully question how to accomplish all that is expected of schools. As a school administrator, I find that the WASC accreditation process provides a framework for meaningful change focused upon the constant for all schools — *student learning*.

The WASC *Focus on Learning* accreditation process is not a set of compliance checkboxes, but criteria that support quality education and allow flexibility to over 4,500 schools that differ in structure and governance. WASC partners with over fifteen agencies that represent public, private, charter, international, and faith-based schools. The self-study process brings together the school community to develop direction and plans for ongoing school improvement while providing an outside perspective from a Visiting Committee composed of volunteer educators. During a recent visit, the head of school thanked the Visiting Committee for their understanding of the uniqueness of the school's mission, their recognition of progress, and the clarity of the suggestions for improvement. He closed by saying WASC provided "critical friends" to ensure that the school always looked first at student learning when making any decisions or changes. The status of being a WASC-accredited school provides quality assurance and recognition of how the school is adding value to students' educations, as well as providing a map to meet future goals.

The Accrediting Commission for Schools provides support for schools through the professional staff in the Burlingame and the Temecula offices and the trained volunteers who participate on Visiting Committees, provide training, and serve on the WASC Commission. These volunteers provide valuable service to schools and in exchange receive outstanding professional development as they work collaboratively with peers as Visiting Committee members. They gain in-depth understanding of the criteria that define high-quality schools, review and analyze data, observe instructional strategies, problem solve with staff, prioritize actions, and then present a completed report to the school. This is economical professional development where participants must demonstrate their own knowledge of 21st century skills. I encourage all school leaders to recruit and support volunteers from their schools to serve on Visiting Committees.

I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as chairperson of the Accrediting Commission for Schools and to work with organizations that have goals to help all schools serve the changing needs of students in a global economy. I encourage you to contact the WASC office or visit the WASC website to access the resources available to assist schools as they continue to help students develop 21st century skills and maintain the *Focus on Learning*.



Executive Director's Update

David E. Brown, Ph.D. | Executive Director (2003–2013), Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC



As a former competitive runner, the notion of “being on my last legs” has significant meaning. It certainly applies metaphorically to the end of my eleven-year career with WASC and 48 years as a teacher and administrator. Unfortunately, the metaphor also has a connection to my physical state. Nonetheless, I am extremely grateful to continue to be

able to walk, play an occasional game of golf, and even succumb to playing the accordion when requested by those who haven't yet heard me play. My running days, however, are clearly well behind me.

I want to use the vehicle of *WASC Words* this one last time to issue a strong expression of deep appreciation to all of you who have served on teams, provided training, and have helped develop the changes we have made over the last decade to remain relevant, current, and strongly aligned with local efforts designed to help schools improve.

I know we can always enhance the procedures, protocols, and trainings that are so vital to providing positive support to schools and school staff members, but it has been the aggregate response of the “field” that has enabled us to continue to be a strong partner with the state departments of education in California and Hawaii and with the international and American schools abroad that we serve. We have also learned from and benefited in so many ways from our partnerships with the independent schools in Hawaii and California, as well as with the many charter and religious accrediting bodies that share our important work.

The privilege of traveling throughout California and Hawaii and to the many schools in Asia and the Pacific Islands has enriched both my professional and personal life. The

significant number of exemplary educators and school supporters who have provided meaningful influence to individual students and to large school systems will remain indelibly imprinted on my mind. I am personally indebted to all of you for the work you do and for the friendship and support you have shared.

WASC is in a strong position as an organization. I am confident the challenges of the present and future will be effectively met through a combination of strong WASC leadership at every level, as well as consistent and caring administrative and teacher support in each of the public and private schools served by the WASC Commission.

Recently, I have been often heard quoting an important concept expressed by Peter Drucker, who said that “Culture eats strategy for breakfast” in effective organizations. Certainly, we all appreciate the vital need to be well organized and to plan effectively, but it is the sum of relationships, personal passion, care and commitment, and the openness to change that best characterizes effective schools and builds a true “culture of excellence.” Congratulations to educators in both public and private venues for the impressive culture of learning and caring that has been developed in our region.

I plan to continue to work alongside many of you as a volunteer, as my wife has made it abundantly clear that “I can't be in the house all day.” So, I will remain active and seek to continue to support your efforts to make a difference in all the schools served by WASC.

Again, thanks to all of you for all you do!



Executive Director's Update

Fred Van Leuven, Ed.D. | Executive Director (2013–), Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC



On October 1, 2013, I officially began my new role as Executive Director for the Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC (ACS WASC). Over the years, I have seen how this strategic planning process has improved schools and student learning and I truly believe in the value of WASC accreditation.

For those of you I have yet to meet, here is a bit of my WASC background. My learning process began in the late 1970s when I was a new teacher and my school experienced its first WASC accreditation visit. Since then, I have served on a number of Visiting Committees and was appointed a WASC Commissioner in 2004. That is when all of the pieces came together; specifically, how WASC makes a real impact on a school community in terms of increasing what students know, what they can do, and improving how they feel about themselves, others, and learning. When I retired as a superintendent in 2008 and began serving as an educational consultant to California school districts, I continued to see the significance and the true need for accreditation.

I have said many times that I believe that the WASC process prevents high-performing schools from slipping into mediocrity and gives underperforming and struggling schools a template to follow for strength. And with the newly adopted Common Core State Standards and other recent changes to our educational system, the WASC accreditation process is even more important. WASC has an increasingly important role to play in helping schools succeed.

WASC is positioned to help schools and districts get stronger. There is a strong team of WASC support staff in our Burlingame and Temecula offices. There is also an invincible group of trained volunteers who give feedback to schools

via site visits. What a powerful combination of effective professional development for both schools and site teams!

Outgoing Executive Director Dr. David Brown has reported that WASC is financially stable, has strong partnerships, and is expanding its service worldwide. His outstanding leadership has brought about improved student learning in California, Hawaii, and to American and international schools in the countries WASC serves. He has kept the WASC vision aligned with the many changes in both educational best practices as well as meeting ongoing legal compliance regulations. I was fortunate to observe this as a Commissioner for six of his eleven-year term; as he hands off the baton, we thank him for all he has done for the benefit of our students.

A marvelous opportunity awaits us as we improve and expand WASC in our quest for educational improvement for all of our students. The final step of the WASC accreditation process is the “celebration of success,” and I am honored to work with you toward that goal.



Preparing Students to be Globally Competent: Viewing the School as a Learning Community

Marilyn S. George, Ed.D. | Associate Executive Director, Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC



Preparing students for an interdependent global society is critical. Educators and students recognize the need to focus upon creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration, which are integral to global competence. These are the four Cs emphasized to prepare students now and for the future. As schools

determine what students should know, understand, and be able to do in order to be globally competent, it is very important to involve all staff in assessing the degree to which students are achieving these desired outcomes. Therefore, involving all staff in the WASC process — an ongoing, dynamic results-based approach — is paramount: essentially a school must view itself as a learning community. The question that we must pose is the following:

How does the WASC process help a school to be a learning community that focuses on preparing students to be globally competent?

The WASC accreditation process clearly shows how the three major ideas that drive a professional learning community are integral to the WASC process. As Dr. Richard DuFour shares, the first idea is that schools have the express purpose to ensure that all students are able to achieve at defined high levels. The second idea is that if a school is to help all students learn, all stakeholders must work collaboratively to address student needs. And the third idea is that school educators will need to use an analytical process to determine if students are learning and appropriately address the students' needs.

The WASC accreditation process includes the total involvement of all stakeholders as a “collaborative culture” in meaningful dialogue, self-reflection, problem-solving, and shared decision-making. Student learning, and therefore, adult learning are integral to the process. The accreditation process reinforces the basic tenets of how adults learn best: the ability to be self-directed and involved with problem-solving approaches related to their passion — high-quality student learning. If a school is committed to preparing students to be globally competent, then

conversations among the stakeholders must occur that center on clarifying and understanding what it means to be globally competent. How does this emphasis relate to our current vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes? Who are our students? What does the data tell us? What questions does the data raise as we refine our schoolwide learner outcomes to address the current and future learning needs of the students?

In a recent research study conducted by the College Board, students and teachers concluded that a high school education is more than preparing students academically; students need to have the knowledge and skills to explore other options and become contributing citizens of the world. Both teachers and students felt strongly that active and participatory learning provides the opportunity for students to be open to learning and achieving. If this is to occur, there must be meaningful conversations to clarify the overarching schoolwide learner outcomes that are measurable and integrated throughout the school's program. These outcomes must address the current critical learner needs and the necessary skills, such as the four Cs, for global competency.

Sample schoolwide learner outcome that resulted from such conversations at several schools include the following:

Students will become:

Contributing Citizens who

- Understand and appreciate diversity
- Understand environmental issues and interdependence of all living things
- Contribute time, energy, or talent to improve the quality of life in the local and global communities
- Understand the consequences of their actions

Innovative Thinkers who

- Build on the ideas, explanations, and reasons of others
- Summarize, analyze, interpret, and evaluate information
- Define problems, form questions or hypotheses, organize inquiry processes, and make conclusions
- Use problem-solving strategies appropriate to the context
- Create original work
- Use technology to create products of high quality



Effective Communicators who

- Are multilingual
- Listen critically with understanding and empathy
- Speak and respond appropriately to the social and academic context
- Articulate concepts, ideas, and opinions through the oral and written word and the arts
- Use multiple technologies

Once a school has established its core beliefs, vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes based on the students' current and future learning needs, the questions that a school must ask are the following:

- If students are going to be successful and contribute to a “flat” or interdependent world, what soft and hard evidence do we need to examine to ensure students are meeting our schoolwide student outcomes as well as essential standards?
- Are we doing everything possible to support that learning?

The challenge expressed by many schools is the measurability of these global outcomes and skills that are beyond the core knowledge; yet no one disagrees that these skills need to be learned and demonstrated by all students. This is where the WASC *Focus on Learning* process serves as a guide for structures and processes that must occur as student achievement of these global outcomes and the academic standards are assessed.

Specific collaborative strategies and approaches within the WASC self-study/visit process support this analysis:

- The examination of the student/community profile data, especially three-year trends and patterns regarding student demographic and achievement data, and the identification of critical learner needs and the regular review of other sources of achievement data, such as examining representative student work samples.
- The regular assessment of the degree to which the students are achieving the schoolwide learner outcomes are being addressed throughout the program as well as the degree to which students and teachers are demonstrating achievement of the academic standards.
- The examination of appropriate assessment strategies that involve students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders in the analysis of the extent to which the schoolwide learner outcomes are being achieved.

- The expectation that all staff, students, and parents must be involved in the regular review and analysis of both formative and summative data about student achievement as the schoolwide action plan is reviewed and refined annually. This includes examining student work, observing students engaged in learning, student reflections and conversations, and the use of rubrics and student portfolios.

Within the *Focus on Learning* process, the interdisciplinary focus groups as well as the stakeholder groups, such as departments and professional learning communities, have been active not only during the formal self-study process (every five or six years) but continuously to examine data, to review school processes, and modify the curricular and instructional approaches.

The WASC accreditation process is integral to a school's culture of learning, evaluation, and assessment; it lays the foundation for the analysis and action to increase student learning. The process reminds the school's leadership that there must be a support system built into the culture that empowers teachers and other stakeholders to work together regarding student learning in an environment of openness and trust. Furthermore, it enables a school to be critical and honest about what is working and what is not working to support increased student achievement. Such important analysis and dialogue builds capacity and coherence in the WASC expectation that this is a “never-ending, non-hyperventilating improvement process.

In summary, the WASC process provides a structure that enables the school to be its own schoolwide professional learning community. Through the ongoing WASC accreditation cycle of quality, a school is held accountable for demonstrating improved student learning through a collaborative culture responsible for learning. A school will have one schoolwide action plan that has evolved from this shared, collaborative focus. Overall, WASC accreditation is a data-informed decision-making process whose principles drive increased student learning — preparing students to be globally competent.

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Twenty-First Century Assessment and WASC

Lee Duncan, Ed.D. | Associate Executive Director, Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC



WASC enjoys the privilege of developing relationships with each and every school that is involved in the accreditation process — not always an easy task with over 4,500 member schools! As schools face changes in education that impact their programs, it is important that WASC stay informed and involved so that we can make necessary revisions to our accreditation

process that will keep it as relevant and valuable as possible. Perhaps one of the most significant changes coming to California will be the creation of new assessment instruments to measure student learning related to the Common Core State Standards.

The Common Core State Standards Initiative has been a nationwide endeavor that has produced a single set of standards for K-12 schools in language arts, mathematics, and science. At this time, 45 states, Washington D.C., four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) have adopted the Common Core State Standards. The purpose of this initiative is to ensure that teachers, students, and parents have a clear understanding of expectations in reading, writing, speaking, listening, language usage, mathematics, and science.

As states adopt the Common Core State Standards, it will be important that the new standards be measured accurately to determine growth in student learning. California is one of the states transitioning to a new assessment instrument to measure student learning growth. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) is a state-led consortium working collaboratively to develop next-generation assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards that accurately measure student progress toward college and career readiness.*†

California has been an active participant in this process and recently submitted a report to the California Superintendent of Public Education, which included recommendations for the Superintendent and California Legislature. The recommendations included suspending certain portions of the STAR testing program and implementing Smarter Balanced

assessment in English language arts and mathematics in the 2014–2015 school year.

The report listed many benefits of the Smarter Balanced assessment, including the following:

- Providing parents and students with accurate information regarding learning levels and readiness for college or career choices.
- Providing teachers with resources that can be used to create specific strategies to meet the learning needs of all students.
- Providing participating schools with a digital library of instructional best practices.
- Providing educators the ability to compare student achievement between schools, districts, and states.

This new assessment shifts away from the common multiple-choice option for all questions and recognizes the need to test students to match 21st century learning styles. The Smarter Balanced assessment is taken online and includes a variety of questions styles such as selected and constructed responses, technology enhanced items, and performance tasks.† State officials are developing initial achievement level descriptors (ALDs) that will be used to distinguish levels of student performance in English language arts/literacy and mathematics. Some educators have commented that this new assessment process will be able to be used in conjunction with AP and SAT/ACT scores to provide a more balanced composite of a student's college/career readiness. It is possible that the Smarter Balanced assessment will be able to eventually replace the current exit exam (CAHSEE) used in all California public schools.

According to the *Smarter Balanced* newsletter[§] more than five thousand schools and one million students have participated in the Smarter Balanced Pilot Test. The plan is to have some schools complete both the STAR testing and the Smarter Balanced Pilot Test in order to provide comparisons that will illustrate the reliability of the new assessment process.

Currently, 26 states are participating in the Smarter Balanced assessment development; within this group, California represents 30% of the total number of students who will be using



the Smarter Balanced assessment instrument. The consortium involves educators, researchers, policymakers, and community groups, with each state providing two delegates.**

On February 20, 2013, California’s State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson, stated:

“It is gratifying to see so many schools accept the challenge of taking part in this pilot test, which is an important step toward our goal of creating a testing system that measures how ready our students are for the challenges of a changing world. The immense interest we are seeing reflects the desire among teachers and administrators for California to move forward toward assessments focused on improving teaching and learning.”*

Smarter Balanced has pursued plans for long-term sustainable funding. They have recently announced an agreement to affiliate with UCLA’s National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, & Student Testing (CRESST).

The timetable for implementation is for pilot testing to be completed in the 2012–2013 school year and field testing to take place in 2013–2014. Beginning in 2014–2015, Smarter Balanced assessment will be operational and ready for use.**

WASC has already been revising its *Focus on Learning* accreditation process to reflect the shift to Common Core State Standards. Recent WASC protocol revisions include the addition of criteria for evaluating online programs, measuring 21st century skills, and measuring how well schools are preparing students for college and career options. As the Smarter Balanced assessment comes into operation, WASC will be ready to further adjust its process to allow schools to use their assessment results to demonstrate student learning growth.

It is exciting to see that the new assessment process is aligned to the focus that WASC has had for many years, that is, a focus on student learning. WASC stands ready to watch the future development and implementation of this state- and region-wide assessment process and then adjust its accreditation process to keep it on the cutting edge of ongoing school improvement.

* Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, www.smarterbalanced.org.
† Barr, J. and Valdez, J. (2013). *Transitioning to California’s Future Assessment System*, California Charter School Conference, March 12, 2013.
§ Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. 2013. *Smarter News*. Vol. 2, Issue 2, March/April.
** California Department of Education, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium FAQs, www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/sbac-faqs.asp.

Accreditation Actions, 2012–2013

WASC accreditation is based on a six-year cycle, with a full self-study occurring every six years. Please visit the WASC website for additional details.

Full Self-Study Visits

Awarded full accreditation status.....	670
6 year	163
6 year with a mid-cycle review	493
5 year	14
Awarded other status.....	30
3 year	5
2 year	4
1 year	17
No term given	4
Accreditation withheld	—

Three-Year Term and Limited-Term Revisits

Awarded terms on revisits.....	158
5 year	2
4 year	20
3 year	113
2 year	19
1 year	3
Accreditation withheld	1

Initial Visits

.....	165
Awarded initial accreditation.....	108
Awarded candidacy status	52
Denied candidacy status	5

Committee Statistics, 2012–2013

The 2012–2013 school year was another active year for Visiting Committees. Over 3,000 volunteers, many serving on multiple visits, served on teams during this past school year. A special thanks to the committee chairs and members who served on the 1,427 teams during the school year! See page 18 for information on volunteering to serve on a Visiting Committee.

Full Self-Study Visits.....	700
Initial Visits	166
Three-Year Term Revisits.....	114
Midterm Review Visits.....	253
Midterm Return Review Visits	5
Limited-Term Revisits.....	44
Special Visits	20
International Midterm Visits.....	9
CIS Preparatory Visits.....	2
CIS Five-Year Renewal Visits.....	4
Expanded Substantive Change Visits	4
SEP Previsits.....	26
Substantive Change Visits.....	71
Validation/Appeal Visits.....	9

Total Committees1,427



WASC Words of Wisdom

It is paramount that schools recognize the importance of preparing students for the 21st century in today’s global society. The four “Cs” that are emphasized within the 21st century skills are critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation. The Common Core State Standards will support students acquiring the critical knowledge and skills in relation to what is essential in the 21st century.

We polled our WASC volunteers on what schools are doing to address the 21st century skills along with the implementation of the Common Core State Standards, and how WASC facilitates these goals through the accreditation process. Many thanks to those who responded. Enjoy!



If Common Core State Standards are currently the “what” of our educational system, the 21st century skills are the “how.” The four Cs emphasized within the 21st century skills: critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation are the heart of preparing students for college, career, and life. Through the *Focus on Learning* process, schools will be able to demonstrate their effectiveness and commitment to the four Cs as they relate to each of the criteria, further ensuring quality teaching and learning for all students.

STEVE GRAYBEHL — WASC member since 1999 — Served on over 20 WASC teams

Twenty-first century skills are no different from any other century skills. Certain skills are universal. Each generation must face the problems and obstacles inherent in that time and place. Schools are offering wide varieties of communication methods and linking them to technology. Students learn creativity by participating in activities which stimulate the other hemisphere of the brain. Collaboration is taught by working with each other on projects, drama, music, and caring for and about each other. The schoolwide learner outcomes are being revised every year in the annual Single Plan for Student Achievement (action plan). WASC participates in the process by examining the learner outcomes, then making suggestions for improvement and giving kudos for excellence.



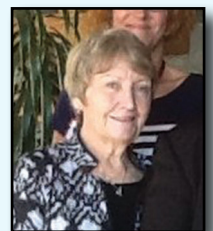
JOAN DELZANGLE — WASC member since 1980 — Served on over 50 WASC teams



Our 21st century culture has created global opportunities for all learners. *Focus On Learning* is enhancing and advancing the growth of schools to meet the worldwide expectations of our global culture. Focusing our educational culture on “student learning” will create common criteria among most educational environments. The *Focus on Learning* process for accreditation enhances initiatives such as the Common Core State Standards, criteria to implement and empower quality learning indicators worldwide, and other 21st century learning skills.

GARY INGRAHAM — WASC member since 1999 — Served on over 35 WASC teams

Increasing recognition and focus upon the skills labeled “21st century skills” are noticeable in schools whether they are public, private, elementary, or secondary. The strategies that appear to have the greatest impact on student success are those that provide a strong connection between the acquisition of knowledge and the meaningful application through presentation and defense of a project that is collaboratively produced and connected to a career theme. These interdisciplinary approaches are difficult, but students do receive a creditable answer to “why do I need to know this?”



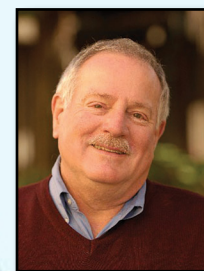
VALENE STALEY — WASC member since 1987 — Served on over 35 WASC teams



One of the benefits of the WASC accreditation process is that it helps schools move from where they are to where they want to be without prescriptions or prejudices. While 2015 sounds both far away and quite near, the introduction of these elevated standards will color all parts of the accreditation process — from self-study through the visit and, most importantly, the action plan. Visiting committees will be helping schools identify internal strengths that support this journey.

LOUISE ROBERTSON — WASC member since 1981 — Served on over 80 WASC teams

Since 2010, when the California School Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards, I have observed WASC-accredited schools changing their teaching methodologies from what was once rote learning into tasks requiring the critical thinking necessary for success in the 21st century. As a result, schoolwide learner outcomes now reflect critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation. Typical outcomes include an emphasis on the use of technology, the application of higher-level thinking skills through simulations, and an in-depth knowledge of how to obtain data necessary for such modeling. WASC has been a major catalyst of this change because it requires schools to carefully think through and document their desired learning outcomes. This process, while time consuming, brings the educational community together to develop and agree not only on goals, but also on how to achieve them.



ROBERT MICHELS — WASC member since 1992 — Served on over 65 WASC teams



The goal of all educators is to prepare students for college and career readiness in a global setting. The Common Core State Standards provide students with the high-quality, cross-curricular educational experiences needed to be successful in the 21st century. Students develop independent critical thinking skills when Common Core State Standards are implemented. The role of the WASC process is to ensure high standards of learning across the curriculum that support all students based on approved educational standards and research-based WASC criteria. This process requires the entire school community to participate and reflect on how the schoolwide learner outcomes are being achieved.

KAREN ANDERSON — WASC member since 1981 — Served on over 60 WASC teams

During my visits to schools, I have witnessed many efforts to address 21st century skills, one of which is the STEM class movement. This is an effort to address advanced problem solving through the use of technology and research skills. By providing the class with an independent study format, students learn to be self-starters. They meet with their teachers to choose their projects and through seminars, class meetings, and peer group support they work on the projects. The students contact authors of the research they are studying and seek out mentors to help guide them through their chosen project. Then, near the end of the work, they apply to be a part of an industry-sponsored event to present their work for recognition and feedback. It is great to see the creative ways in which this effort to provide students with a path to their future is being addressed by teachers.



BARBARA NUNES — WASC member since 1986 — Served on over 60 WASC teams



WASC Words of Wisdom — *Continued*



I feel very fortunate to be part of WASC Visiting Committees, I have visited many schools, and each time it is a new learning experience. The schools that I have had the opportunity to visit during the past several years have made a sincere effort to prepare students for the 21st century. To accomplish this task, individualizing the instructional process to meet the needs of students has been employed. Schools are using projects that demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving. The schools that use technology as one tool in the effort to encourage and ultimately measure creativity and innovation have “buy in” from most students. Many students are familiar with several technology venues and are eager to use them. The communication and collaboration necessary for most effective projects is measured by group presentations of the data collected during the process of completing the project.

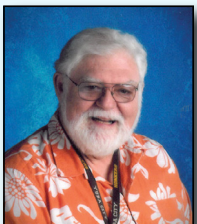
This process differs greatly from the “standardized test” and in many cases elicits more effort from students and a greater sense of accomplishment. WASC helps facilitate the goals set by the school by providing an objective “set of eyes” that understands the necessary goals and methods for accomplishing those goals. The WASC team is trained to look at what the school is doing to create an educational program that will prepare its students for the 21st century. The school needs to identify areas that meet the goals and those that need strengthening. WASC provides the map for programs that have student success as a focus.

JANE HAMMAKER — WASC member since 1996 — Served on over 25 WASC teams

The process of self-study and reflection combined with the support and feedback from WASC Visiting Committees is a powerful strategy to ensure that schools are successful in preparing their students. Schools that use the WASC accreditation process as their method to focus on school improvement will find greater success in achieving their school goals and preparing students to be successful in the 21st century. Schools recognize the importance of preparing their students for the 21st century. As schools engage in the WASC accreditation process, stakeholder groups have the opportunity to look at data and evidence to determine how effective they are in meeting the four Cs that are emphasized within the 21st century skills: critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation.



JOHN SUGIYAMA — WASC member since 1981 — Served on over 45 WASC teams



Focus on Learning — the WASC accreditation process — provides a useful roadmap for implementing the Common Core State Standards. While the four Cs drive today’s efforts for improvement in our schools, the accreditation process provides an optimum means of putting into practice the goals for each school. In the years ahead the great challenge will be to integrate the Common Core State Standards in the most effective ways possible. Instruction is the area where success will be tested. The structure provided by the accreditation process is the best available for creating successful schools. The best thing about the *Focus on Learning* process is its flexibility and applicability to any and all situations, schools, and programs. As we look forward to continual improvement in our schools, the accreditation process will play a continuing, and hopefully, an expanding and evermore useful role in school improvement.

JAMES ROULSTEN — WASC member since 1970 — Served on over 70 WASC teams



Schools have a great opportunity during the transition from STAR to Common Core State Standards (Smarter Balanced) to measure student attainment of schoolwide learner outcomes and include the growth trends as evidence of student learning. Most schoolwide learner outcomes include the 21st century skills of critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and collaboration. The WASC process assists schools with the integration of these skills with the Common Core State Standards.

GARY JOHNSON — WASC member since 1993 — Served on over 60 WASC teams

Research has shown that the average worker will have somewhere between five and fifteen jobs by the age of 30. The one-career model for most people is passé at best. In order to give these new workers the best preparation for this new employment paradigm, the skills we teach can no longer be simply information and technology. Adaptability, cooperation, and problem solving are going to be the new marketable skills, and people with those skills, combined with the ability to rapidly absorb the knowledge required for that particular position, will secure their success. What students learn will still be important, but their ability to self-teach will be essential — the teacher and learner will be the same person.



SANDRA DREW — WASC member since 1997 — Served on over 50 WASC teams



Every organization that excels has developed refined goals to use as a roadmap for success. A review of school learner outcomes that are aligned with 21st century skills is the starting point. Along the way, the *Focus on Learning* process should be embraced as a navigational point for schools on their journey to becoming a school of excellence.

DOUG BAUMGART — WASC member since 1988 — Served on over 55 WASC teams

Postsecondary schools are focused on providing adult learners educational experiences to develop 21st century skills that will support success in higher education and employment. The self-study process helps to facilitate the development of these skills as faculty and staff review, revise, and implement schoolwide learner outcomes that align with this mission and are embedded in course curriculum. When the schoolwide learner outcomes become a part of the culture of a postsecondary school, students are more engaged in their learning and can see how their achievement is helping them to build a better life.



LIANNE GREENLEE — WASC member since 1997 — Served on over 5 WASC teams



The accreditation process is a natural way to facilitate the integration of 21st century skills into schoolwide learning outcomes. By modeling the four Cs in the development of the self-assessment, school leaders can help their communities use the skills necessary for student success in a global society. During the transition to the Common Core State Standards, the WASC accreditation process can provide the infrastructure for making changes and confirming best practices already occurring on site. Collaboration and communication have always been key components of the accreditation process. Colleagues working together on common goals for school improvement will have ownership of the outcomes; how they communicate their work to the school community will garner support for their success.

KAREN LEONG CLANCY — WASC member since 2006 — Served on over 10 WASC teams



ACS WASC COMMISSIONERS

(listed by the organizations they represent)

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Damon Kerby, Assistant Chairperson

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Grant Bennett

Richard Bray

Rebecca Buettner

Martin Griffin

Mary Luebben

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Western Catholic Educational Association

Thomas Butler

Chad Colden

Nina Russo

Sally Todd

Commission Update

The Commission is comprised of individuals representing the various constituencies of ACS WASC. The Commission convenes three times a year.

2014 Commission Meetings

Winter

January 27–28, 2014

San Diego, CA

Spring

April 28–29, 2014

Burlingame, CA

Summer

June 23–24, 2014

Burlingame, CA

ACS WASC Commission Members

Members who left the Commission this June include: Shabaka Heru, Jesus Holguin, Harlan Lyso, George Martinez, and Rosaline Turnbull. We are deeply appreciative of the excellent service provided by these Commissioners and wish them well in their continued service to others.

ACS WASC welcomes the following new Commission members: David Condon, Carlyn Fujimoto, Barbara Nunes, Milt Stowe, and Sophia Waugh.

ACS WASC Commission Officers

As of July 1, ACS WASC has a new chairperson and assistant chairperson. Chairperson Dr. Valene Staley is recently retired as the assistant superintendent of Instructional Services at the Porterville Unified School District (PUSD). Her job description included the oversight and supervision of principals, curriculum, assessments, student services, and placement of nontraditional students. She was with the PUSD since 1967.

Our new assistant chairperson, Mr. Damon Kerby, has been on the WASC Commission since 2010. He recently retired as headmaster of Saint Mark's School, an independent school in San Rafael, California, a position he held from 1987 to 2011. He holds an A.B. in History from Kenyon College and an M.A. in Education from Stanford University. He is past president of the Board of Directors of the California Association of Independent Schools and represented California on the National Association of Independent Schools Commission on Accreditation.



International Update

Harlan E. Lyso, Ph.D. | Chairperson (2011–2013), Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC



As a component of their schoolwide learner outcomes, all international schools and many U.S. schools speak about the importance of their students becoming internationally minded, globally competent, and global citizens. For example, in its mission statement, Porterville Unified School District

speaks about preparing its students “with the skills to be productive citizens in a global society.” Yet many within the worldwide school community assume that following an English-language curriculum, such as the Cambridge International Curriculum, the International Baccalaureate (IB), or a traditional U.S.-based curriculum, is all that is necessary to comprise an “international school.” While a challenging, relevant, coherent, well-documented, and globally focused curriculum is an absolute necessity, and an international curriculum has the potential to develop a more global orientation, no curriculum by itself will develop international mindedness or globally competent students. In fact, in the absence of a skill set that incorporates 21st century skills and global mindedness, it is possible that the brightest and best-educated students will be underprepared to play a meaningful leadership role in a world that is ever more interdependent.

WASC believes that global competencies include:

1. The knowledge of concepts, skills, and languages of various disciplines to research current global issues
2. The understanding of the interdependence of economic, political, technological, environmental, and social systems worldwide
3. The understanding of multiple perspectives
4. The valuing of diversity
5. The ability to communicate with multilingual skills, through fluency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening and through the use of technologies
6. The responsible engagement of action and service to improve conditions both locally and globally
7. The ability to function effectively in an interdependent world.

An invaluable resource for schools attempting to incorporate global competencies within their school goals is *Educating for Global Competence: Preparing our Youth to Engage the World* by Veronica Boix Mansilla and Anthony Jackson.* The authors define global competence as “the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance.” In the preface to this book, Dr. Howard Gardner captures that which is needed for a school to develop global competence within its students: “As educators, we must model these positive virtues ourselves; we must explain the reasons why we do what we do and why we do not endorse other, perhaps tempting, alternatives; we must be willing to confront examples of bad work and bad citizenship, whether they occur among 20-year-olds or 60-year-olds, in history, literature, and our hometown; and we must help young people develop their own ethical compasses, which they can and should use in conjunction with their mentors and their peers.”

Whether one calls their school an “international” school or simply refers to international mindedness, global competencies, or 21st century learning skills, the school must not only ensure that its curriculum enables its students to develop intellectually, but must also focus on developing the skills and attitudes that will enable its students to become effective participants in an increasingly complex, diverse, and interdependent environment. Should this not be the goal of every school?

* Boix Mansilla V. & Jackson A. (2011). *Educating for Global Competence: Preparing our Youth to Engage the World*. New York, NY: Asia Society.



Office Update

Burlingame Office



L-R: Mitchell Peck, Judy Abbott, Lino Gantan, Alice Hauser, Frances Rivette, Lisa Blaylock, Christine Toti, Ari Nishiki-Finley, Michelle Nunes, Susan Lange, Sheléne Peterson, Cynthia Newton, Albert Chan

Temecula Office



L-R: Tiffany Waite, Emily Barton, Ginger Hovenic, Lee Duncan, Michelle Allen, Denise Jagoda, Alicia Adatao

New WASC Staff



Denise Jagoda joined the Temecula WASC office in April 2012. She works as the assistant coordinator of School and Member Relations. She was employed by the Temecula Valley Unified School District from 2001 to 2012 as a substitute teacher. Denise enjoys volunteer work in education: the High School Foundation, PTA and Student Site Council, as well as the Assistance League of Temecula Valley. Denise is a proud “Marine brat” and has lived in six states. She has been married to her husband, Evan, for 23 years and they have two children: Daniel, a student at UCLA and Carolyn, a high school junior. Family time spent outdoors, whether hiking, biking, playing tennis, or spending time at the beach are among her favorite pastimes. She also enjoys watching her daughter play competitive soccer!



Ari Nishiki-Finley began working for the Burlingame WASC office in April 2013 as the addition to the reception desk. She attended college in Washington State as well as San Francisco State University and earned a degree in geography and a certificate in event planning and tourism management. Outside the office Ari’s hobbies include outdoor activities such as camping, hiking, running, and swimming, as well as traveling internationally.

Retirement News



Cris Lunny retired at the end of February 2013 after over 21 years at WASC. Her outstanding dedication and camaraderie is sorely missed. We wish her all the best!



Twenty-First Century Skills in Our Schools

Ginger Hovenic, Ed.D. | Director of School and Member Relations, Southern California, Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC



Twenty-first-century learning skills are not new. These skills involve enabling today’s students to be academically competitive in global situations; good citizens within their community, country, and world; and effective within their workplaces. It means that education must continue to engage new technologies, equip students with rigorous academic coursework, and foster innovation and creativity.

As defined by The Partnership for 21st Century Skills’ Framework for Learning in the 21st Century, these skills are grouped into three major categories: (1) Learning and Innovation Skills, which include creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration; (2) Information, Media, and Technology Skills, which involve effectively using, managing, and evaluating information from digital technology and communication tools; and (3) Life and Career Skills, which include flexibility and adaptability, self-direction, teamwork, appreciation of diversity, accountability, and leadership. While a 21st century education still

involves mastering the content of core academic subjects, 21st century learning skills should be infused throughout the curriculum.

Living in a digital world as we do, students need to learn to use the tools that have become essential to life and work in the 21st century, both academically and in the workforce. WASC has developed new accreditation protocols, which include prompts to target technology integration within the curriculum and how the collaborative process for learning and task completion influences student outcomes as teachers prepare their students for beyond graduation.

The schoolwide learner outcomes seen by Visiting Committees often times reflect the schools intent to focus on these skills. But how does a school know that these outcomes are being achieved? WASC Visiting Committees have begun to ask these questions and encourage schools to re-examine their schoolwide learner outcomes in relationship to 21st century skills and to find the tools to measure how their students are progressing toward achieving these goals.

Creating a generation of students who are academically competitive in a global society, effective and concerned citizens, creative problem solvers, and proficient communicators can only improve our nation’s competitiveness in a knowledge-driven economy. These skills are the lifeblood of a productive workforce in today’s global, knowledge-based economy.

ACS WASC Membership, 2012-2013

The school membership of the Accrediting Commission for Schools continued to grow during the 2012–2013 school year. Currently, approximately 180 new applicant schools are preparing for their initial accreditation visit with WASC.

EVALUATION AREA	# OF SCHOOLS 2010–2011	# OF SCHOOLS 2011–2012	# OF SCHOOLS 2012–2013
California	3,686	3,753	3,795
Hawaii	194	206	202
Out of State	14	27	33
Pacific Islands			
American Samoa	10	10	10
Federated States of Micronesia	2	2	2
Guam	34	35	36
Northern Marianas	22	2	1
Marshall Islands	3	3	5
Palau	1	1	1
Africa	1	1	1
Asia	207	218	217
Australia	1	1	1
Europe	—	—	1
Mexico	1	1	1
Middle East	—	—	19
TOTAL	4,176	4,260	4,325



Accrediting Commission for Schools

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Volunteering: Serving on a WASC Visiting Committee



Accrediting Commission for Schools, WASC

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WASC accreditation visits rely entirely on volunteers. Your support is greatly appreciated.

WASC Overview

The Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), one of six regional accrediting associations in the United States, is known worldwide. WASC provides assistance to schools in California, Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, and East Asia, currently serving over 4,500 schools.

WASC's philosophy centers upon three beliefs: a school's goal is successful student learning; each school has a clear purpose and schoolwide student goals; and a school engages in external and internal evaluations as part of ongoing school improvement to support high-quality student learning.

In addition to its official title, WASC also stands for: "We Are Student-Centered."

Accreditation is integral to a school's perpetual cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, and monitoring. The WASC accreditation process fosters excellence in elementary, secondary, and adult education by encouraging school improvement. WASC accreditation recognizes schools that meet an acceptable level of quality, in accordance with established, research-based WASC criteria.

Visiting Committees

WASC accreditation visits range from one-day initial visits to three- or four-and-a-half day full self-study reviews.

Visiting committees are composed of two to eight members, one of whom is the chairperson. A committee is comprised of educators representing a wide range of educational experience and expertise. Training workshops are provided and new members work closely with experienced chairs.

Visiting team members review the WASC criteria and study reports from the school in preparation for the visit. During the visit, the team observes the school in operation and other evidence; reviews student performance data; observes students engaged in learning; and dialogues individually and collectively with administrators, teachers, students, and other stakeholders. The visiting team then prepares a report outlining the team's findings for the school and WASC Commission.

Why Serve?

- Learn about a variety of educational strategies, approaches, and practices
- Observe programs in action
- Develop and cultivate new professional friends
- Provide insights and reflections as a fellow educator
- Work together to ensure the high achievement of all learners
- Demonstrate one's professional commitment to quality education
- Give back to the educational community

"Serving as a visiting team member is by far the best professional development opportunity available in education today. Taking the time to see a school from all facets does so much for the perspective that we bring back to our own sites."

Shawn Marshall, WASC VC Member
Riverside, CA

Please contact our office or visit the WASC website: www.acswasc.org for further information.

The WASC Volunteer Data Sheet can be found on the WASC website at www.acswasc.org/vc_volunteering.htm

WASC
Accrediting Commission for Schools



WASC Words 2013-2014

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