



PNAIS
Pacific Northwest Association
of INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

PNAIS Self Study Manual

September 2010 Version

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Changes from the previous September 2007 version:

1. Good Practice #4 has been eliminated.
2. The introductory material now includes the Association's recently approved mission, core values and essential characteristics (pgs. 1-2), all of which influence our accreditation standards.
3. Changes were made to language used in various Major Standards, Good Practices, and Elements so as to reduce the Association's potential liability. These changes appear in the following sections: Association Mission, Finance, Residential Program, Administrative Practice and Personnel, School Plant, and Health and Safety.
4. For schools with an extensive outdoor/wilderness program, the requirement is now that such schools "must have an external safety review of its program." References to the "PNAIS Outdoor Safety Committee" have been eliminated from the Manual as this group of outdoor educators is not a PNAIS committee.

Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools
Mission, Core Values, and Essential Characteristics

Approved by PNAIS Board – May 2, 2010

I. PNAIS Mission Statement – approved by PNAIS membership on May 2, 2010

To assist schools in fulfilling their mission to provide high quality education for children by promoting and protecting the independence of our schools, by representing the interest of our schools, and by fostering collegial relationships and ethical leadership within our schools.

II. PNAIS Core Values

In living the mission of PNAIS, the following core values guide the Association's interactions, services, and accreditation standards. These core values are essential to assisting schools in providing high quality education for children.

- Independence
- Free and Open Inquiry
- Commitment to Diversity
- Ongoing School Improvement
- Collegial Relationships and Ethical Leadership

Independence

PNAIS schools believe that the latitude to determine their own missions and philosophies, to select their faculty and students, and to develop their curricula is an essential prerequisite for their success.

Accordingly, PNAIS schools are self-governing and self-supporting without substantial dependence upon government, other entities, or individuals. Maintaining this independence requires an outreach to and appreciation by a variety of audiences, including policy makers, the media, prospective parents and students, and prospective teachers.

Free and Open Inquiry

In PNAIS schools, students actively engage in lively yet respectful exchanges of differing viewpoints. Through their curriculum and pedagogy, PNAIS schools teach students to think critically and to challenge their own perspectives and those of others. PNAIS schools create a culture where students are free to express their ideas on all subjects.

Commitment to Diversity

PNAIS schools commit to creating a community of students, families, trustees, faculty, and staff from as many diverse backgrounds and perspectives as possible. The diversity of the community promotes a culture of free and open inquiry. PNAIS recognizes, however, that a school's unique mission and geographical location may lead it to enroll students and/or hire faculty and staff from a less diverse population. The smaller the slice of humanity from which the school draws members of its community, the greater the burden the school bears to demonstrate adherence to the Association's core value of a commitment to diversity and to the Association's accreditation standards.

Ongoing School Improvement

PNAIS schools are expected to engage in a continuous process of research, reflection and on-going improvement that enables them to stay relevant to their missions and to the students and families they serve. Schools demonstrate this commitment by working continuously to improve their educational programs, actively participating in professional development opportunities and pursuing and maintaining accreditation by PNAIS.

Collegial Relationships and Ethical Leadership

PNAIS has benefitted from a long tradition of collegial relationships and ethical leadership manifested by our schools. To sustain this tradition, schools voluntarily operate in accordance with good independent school practices and PNAIS accreditation standards. Schools support their employees in serving on accreditation visiting teams, in attending professional development conferences, in serving as PNAIS volunteers on committees that help guide the development and delivery of association services, and in assisting other schools with building and strengthening their programs. This active participation and willingness to serve the greater good contributes to the overall success of the Association and benefits our schools and the individuals within them as they appreciate and learn from the diversity of experience that each school brings to the Association.

III. Essential Characteristics of PNAIS Schools

In order to assist schools in fulfilling their commitment to provide children a high-quality educational experience, we believe that schools that are mission-appropriate for the Association support the mission and core values of the Association and abide by the following essential characteristics for PNAIS schools:

Commitment to the Public Good

As not-for-profit organizations under the IRS code 501(c) (3), PNAIS schools must provide for the public good. We expect schools to accomplish this by offering an independent educational option for a wide variety of families and by giving back to their community through service, economic development, and providing models of quality organizations, curriculum and instruction.

Effective Governance and Operations

Success of PNAIS schools is secured through governance structures that provide fiduciary responsibility and strategic oversight, the goal of which is long term viability. These structures work in partnership with an administrative structure that effectively manages the daily operation of the organization, ensuring the sustainability of the school for faculty, staff, and families.

Physical Location or Place

Top educational opportunities and experiences for elementary and secondary children are grounded in teacher-student interactions. To this end, we expect schools to have a campus where students are able to frequently and meaningfully interact with adults and peers.

Primary Focus of Academic Education

PNAIS only accredits schools whose primary focus is academic education. In addition, the Association only accredits schools in their entirety; it does not accredit parts of school programs. The mission, philosophy, and goals of our schools articulate a commitment to academic preparation; ensuring students are inspired toward and prepared for subsequent educational opportunities. This requires PNAIS schools to create relevant and current curricula, with pedagogies based on present understanding of learning. PNAIS does not accredit schools whose primary focus is therapeutic, wilderness based, or athletic. PNAIS schools prepare students for pursuit of future educational opportunities.

Commitment to the Best Interests of Children

PNAIS schools demonstrate an ongoing commitment to the best interests of the students and families they serve. This includes commitments to the long term sustainability of the school; providing the continuity of educational experience through to the graduation of the child; promoting a safe and inclusive community; adequate resources for advising and counseling of students at their developmental age; and comprehensive programming for residential programs in schools that have them.

Overview of the PNAIS Accreditation Process

The PNAIS accreditation process is one of the major ways in which the Association fulfills its mission of helping schools provide a quality education for their students. PNAIS schools have voluntarily joined the Association and, in so doing, have committed to the core value of ongoing school improvement with the goal of gaining and maintaining compliance with the Association's Major Standards.

In implementing the process, the Association makes a point of recognizing that each school has a unique mission and philosophy. The Association does not try to impose a specific set of criteria that each school must meet; rather, the Association's major standards are based upon those qualities that have been deemed necessary in a quality institution. An accredited school has illustrated that there is congruence between the school's stated mission and its actual program and services. Additionally, an accredited school has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially achieving these purposes, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so during the accreditation cycle.

While accreditation does not guarantee the quality of every course or program offered by a school, the competence of individual staff members or graduates, or the experience of individual students, it does reflect recognition of a school's commitment to meeting the Association's major standards.

PNAIS is a member in good standing of the NAIS Commission on Accreditation and has voluntarily agreed to abide by the *Criteria for Effective Independent School Accreditation Practices* and to submit to a thorough ten-year evaluation of its accreditation procedures by the Commission. The Association's most recent review by the Commission took place in October 2009. Additionally, the PNAIS accreditation program has been recognized by the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) and the State of Washington.

What does the accreditation process entail?

Accreditation assumes that a school, over time, has been comparing its own development with that of the Association's Major Standards. With the assistance of the Association's Annual Report, which asks a school to illustrate the ways in which it has enhanced its programs annually, schools are able to gauge how close they are to beginning the self study process. When a school feels it is meeting the Major Standards, it embarks upon an institutional self study guided by the Association's Self Study Manual. This intense self-reflection is an opportunity to examine and evaluate itself in light of its own mission and philosophy. The process involves the school's various constituents and provides guidance for the school's future excellence, viability, and sustainability.

The self-study process results in a comprehensive document that elaborates the ways in which the school is fulfilling its mission, articulates strengths and weaknesses, illustrates the school's compliance with the Major Standards and provides plans and priorities for the future. The self study is shared with the peer group visiting team, made up of 5 to 15 educators from around the country and/or region. The visiting team's four-day visit involves the review of every aspect of the school's programs, operations and compliance with the school's compliance with the Major Standards. The team makes a point of meeting with members of the school's various constituencies. The visiting team creates its own report that includes observations, commendations, recommendations and suggestions to assist the school in its institutional improvement. The Association's Accreditation Committee reviews this report and makes a recommendation to the PNAIS Board of Governors regarding the school's accreditation status. The PNAIS Board of Governors makes the final decision regarding the accreditation status of each school.

What are the benefits of accreditation?

In addition to promoting school improvement, there are many other benefits that come about as a result of accreditation:

- Accreditation assists parents and the general public in assessing whether the school provides an enriching learning environment while maintaining an efficient and effective operation;
- Accreditation provides school leadership with an independent, non-governmental validation that the school they oversee is effectively delivering a quality educational experience to its students;
- Accreditation eases the transition students face as they move from one accredited school to another by accepting the incoming student's credits and academic record;
- Accreditation provides education leaders at all levels with deserved recognition for going above and beyond the minimum to demonstrate their ongoing commitment to quality;
- Accreditation provides educators with valuable information about effective practices in other schools through participation on peer review teams.

What happens after a school is accredited?

Since the Association views accreditation as an on-going process of school improvement, accredited schools are required to submit a response report to their visiting team report within 18 to 36 months after the visit. This report must address all of the team's recommendations and illustrate the ways in which the school has utilized these recommendations to improve its program and operations. The Association's Annual Report helps keep schools on track in preparation for their next accreditation visit eight years after the previous visit. For more information about the Annual Report, refer to Appendix "E" in the Accreditation Manual.

Who oversees the PNAIS accreditation process?

While the Association's Board of Governors has primary oversight responsibility for the accreditation process, the Board has charged the Accreditation Committee with the review of the accreditation reports and annual reports. The Standards and Practices subcommittee constantly reviews the appropriateness of the accreditation standards and assesses the effectiveness of the Association's various accreditation policies and procedures.

Understanding the Self Study Structure

The self study is structured in a way that prioritizes the importance of each of the Association's expectations. These expectations are divided into three different categories – Major Standards, Good Practices, and Elements.

The **Major Standards** are seen as the most important components of a quality and stable institution and must be met in order to gain or maintain Accredited Member status. Failure to meet a Major Standard results in a condition for an Accredited Member and non-accreditation for a Candidate Member. Indeed, if it is determined prior to the accreditation team visit that a school will not be able to meet one of the Major Standards, it is best to postpone the visit until such time that the school can meet the standard.

The **Good Practices** are seen as important components of the Major Standards. Failure to meet a Good Practice results in at least a recommendation if not a major recommendation.

The **Elements** are seen as important components of the Good Practices. Failure to meet an Element results in a recommendation.

Writing the Self Study

The self study provides the background information and analysis on which the visiting team will rely. The process should start with a review of the school's mission statement. For the self study document to be effective, it must be readable and should convey to the visiting team an accurate and clear snapshot of the many facets of the school - both strengths and weaknesses. Careful attention should be given to keeping the report manageable in length. There is no correct length, but larger schools often aim to keep their report under 250 pages while smaller schools have aimed for under 150 pages.

A key responsibility of the Self Study Coordinator is to serve as editor, pulling together the drafts from the several committees, giving coherence to the whole, removing excessive descriptive information, and eliminating repetitious information. More information about the roles and responsibilities of the Self Study Coordinator are outlined on pages 12 and 13 the Accreditation Manual.

The **Self Study Manual** is intended as a guide to the self study, and it provides structure for the written report. Each section begins with the Major Standard and is then followed by various Good Practices and Elements, most of which are followed by a series of questions designed to help the school explore each area in the context of the school's own individual mission. If the questions do not adequately cover an important aspect of the school program, the school should feel free to add the information necessary to describe this aspect to the visiting team. **However, it is important that no questions be deleted.** If a school is preparing for a dual accreditation with another accrediting body, it is best to discuss this with the PNAIS Director of Accreditation or Executive Director. It may be appropriate to utilize segments from both agencies' self studies.

Individuals or committees charged with drafting responses to the self study questions should take into consideration the following points:

- Committee members should discuss the various questions first before drafting responses. Starting with a draft response for committee members to consider inhibits self reflection and is not viewed as an appropriate approach.
- Answers should reflect what the school is currently doing and not what it plans to be doing in the future.
- Extensive detailed information, such as descriptions of curriculum, should not be included in the report, but should be made available to the team during the visit.
- Each section concludes by asking for the school's own recommendations in that area. The school and the visiting team will benefit from thorough and straight forward responses to these questions. The essence of the self study process is to take a hard look at what is being done, place that in the context of the philosophy and mission of the school, assess areas of strength and weakness, and formulate recommendations for future action.
- The self study must be sent to visiting team members no later than one month prior to the visit. Stress the importance of each committee finishing its section in time to allow for the overall compilation and editing process and time for printing and mailing the report. Establishing and enforcing deadlines is crucial.
- Schools with extensive outdoor/wilderness programs must have an external safety review of its program.
- If the school has started work on particular areas identified as needing improvement, committees do not need to update their sections constantly. It is best to stop at a designated point and then update the visiting team on the work accomplished since the completion of the self study.

Constituent Survey Tools

Some schools have used various surveys from Advanc-ED (advanc-ed.org), formerly the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE). Some schools have used surveys available through the Independent School Association of the Central States (ISACS), which provide data norms based upon other independent schools. Contact ISACS at www.ISACS.org for additional details. Many schools use online sources such as Survey Monkey, Zoomerang, etc. Any of these options will suffice.

Formatting the Completed Self Study

Most Self Study Coordinators have found it beneficial to provide colleagues with a style sheet for writing responses to the various questions. As you design your own school's style sheet, please take into account the following recommendations:

- The text of all Major Standards, Good Practices, Elements, and questions should be bold faced and should precede the school's responses.
- Responses should be a series of sentences. Do not overuse "bullets".
- Use a readable font style and size (12 point), 1" margins, and single spacing.
- Use third person ("the school" or "the community") rather than first person ("I" or "We") for all answers.
- double side the pages when copying the document.
- Use a page numbering system that is consistently throughout the document.
- Use dividers to separate the various sections.
- Use either a three ring binder or combed binding system for the completed document.

Compiling Supplementary Material for the Self Study

Many of the self study sections ask for additional information that will provide team members with more in-depth information about a variety of areas. *The Master List of Documents to be Provided* (pages 44-45) details which information should be sent to team members prior to the visit and which information may be provided on site. At any point in the self study process, questions may be directed to the Director of Accreditation or the Executive Director of PNAIS.

PNAIS Accreditation Process

The Association has deep interest in schools using the accreditation process as a tool for self reflection and school improvement. The Visiting Team will read the self study and assess the school during the visit with an eye toward this interest.

Who was responsible for this section of the report?

Major Standard

The school has demonstrated a commitment to on-going school improvement through the successful completion of each step of the PNAIS accreditation process.

Good Practice #1: The school has reviewed its mission statement as the starting point in the self-study process.

- 1.1:** Describe the way in which the mission statement was reviewed.
- 1.2:** Describe the way in which the mission statement was used as the starting point for the self-study.

Good Practice #2: The school has conducted a self-study that provides for broad participation of the school community and full disclosure in the examination of strengths and weaknesses

- 2.1:** Describe the manner in which the school conducted its self-study.
 - 2.1.a:** How were committees structured? What timeline was followed?
 - 2.1.b:** Who was involved and at what point in various sections of the report?
 - 2.1.c:** Describe the specific roles of faculty, administration, trustees, parents, students, and the larger community regarding information gathering, analysis, and recommendations.
 - 2.1.d:** How and to whom were drafts of the report disseminated?
- 2.2:** From your experience with the self study, what would you do differently another time? How might the procedures be improved for others?

Element #2a: The school has provided for broad participation in the self study by surveying its faculty and staff, students, parents, and, if appropriate, alumni.

- 2a.1:** What surveys tools were used in collecting information from faculty and staff, students, parents, and, if appropriate, alumni? How were the surveys conducted?
- 2a.2:** How were the survey results tabulated, summarized, and shared with the necessary participating constituents? (Note: findings from the surveys will be referenced in other sections of the self study)

Good Practice #3: The school has addressed all major recommendations from its previous accreditation visit (only for schools going through re-accreditation)

- 3.1:** Describe the steps taken to address these major recommendations since the last visit.

- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the accreditation process?**
- **What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to the accreditation process?**

Documents To Be Provided

- School Profile (see Appendix A - include as 1st page of self study)
- Mission Statement and supporting philosophy and goal statements (include as 2nd page of self study)
- Provide a brief history of the school (include as 3rd page of self study)
- Visiting Team Report from the last evaluation and any Response Reports if applicable (For team chair and vice chair prior to preliminary visit)
- Copies of the school's PNAIS Annual Reports for the past five years (For team chair and vice chair prior to preliminary visit)
- Copies of surveys used to gather information from various constituencies

Association Philosophy

This section is intended to provide the visiting team with a broad overview of the school's culture and practice while also providing a framework for the implementation of the school's program. A small committee consisting of at least one member of the school's governing body should address the questions posed in this section.

Who was responsible for this section of the report?

Major Standard

The philosophy, principles, and practices of PNAIS schools are consistent with a free, open, humane, and diverse society; schools provide an intellectual environment in which students are encouraged to express individual points of view and to examine and debate all sides of a subject.

Good Practice #4: The school follows applicable non-discriminatory policies and practices.

- 4.1:** What is the school's non-discrimination statement?
- 4.2:** How does the school publish its statement of non-discrimination on an annual basis?

Good Practice #5: The school operates in a way that promotes student freedom of inquiry, diversity of viewpoints, and independent critical thinking.

- 5.1:** In what ways does the school create an environment in which students are encouraged to express individual points of view and to examine and debate all sides of a subject?
- 5.2:** In what ways does the school create environments that promote conversation about ethics, morals and character development?

Element #5a: The school climate is characterized by mutual respect for persons and property.

- 5a.1:** How does the school work to create mutual respect in the learning environment?

Good Practice #6: The school has, through its governing body, defined what diversity means for the school.

- 6.1:** How does the school define diversity for itself? How, when, and by whom was this definition developed?
- 6.2:** What statements does the school make in its mission, philosophy, goals, and policies regarding diversity?

Good Practice #7: The school sustains a commitment to respond to the demands of a diverse society.

- 7.1:** In what ways does the school manifest this commitment with its various constituencies and through its practices?
- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the association's philosophy?**
- **What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to the association's philosophy?**

School Mission

This section is intended to assist the school in its review of its mission statement, philosophy, and goals. Members of the governing body, administration, faculty, staff, and other relevant constituencies should be involved in answering the questions posed below. These deliberations should be shared with the larger school community.

Who was responsible for this section of the report?

Major Standard

The school has a clear mission statement, philosophy, and goals.

Good Practice #8: The school's governing body and staff understand and support the school's mission, philosophy and goals.

- 8.1:** What are the school's mission, philosophy, and goals today?
 - 8.1.a:** When were they last formulated? By whom? Through what process?
 - 8.1.b:** If changes were made, what were they and what brought about these changes?
 - 8.1.c:** What provision is made for regular review and revision?
- 8.2:** Are there parts of the mission statement about which there is a lack of consensus on meaning or interpretation? If so, please explain.

Good Practice #9: The school effectively communicates the school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals.

- 9.1:** In what ways does the school communicate its school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals?

Good Practice #10: The school evidences in its program(s) and operations the school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals, all of which are appropriate to meet the needs of the students it serves.

- 10.1:** The head of the school is required to provide a written statement reflecting how the mission and philosophy are interpreted including the ways in which the mission is consistent with a free, open, humane, and diverse society. He or she should show how the mission is being supported in the policies, procedures, and objectives of the school. In doing this, the head should give examples and indicate how various programs and methods reflect the school's mission.
 - 10.2:** In what ways does the school assess the effectiveness of the ways in which the mission, philosophy and goals are evidenced in the school program(s) and operations?
 - 10.3:** What recommendations are made to give the mission and philosophy a more vital and central role in the life of the school?
 - 10.4:** To the extent that any division of the school has an individual philosophy or goals, that division will provide a written statement of its individual philosophy and its relation to the school's mission, operational procedures, policies, programs, and objectives.
- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the school's mission?**
 - **What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to the school's mission?**

Institutional Leadership

Independence for PNAIS schools means that the school has institutional leadership in place that develops and promotes the school mission and vision consistent with the principles of PNAIS and protects the school's implementation of that mission and vision from undue interference and inappropriate influence and control from stakeholders within the school as well as from third parties outside of the school.

This section is intended for all institutional leaders who have substantial influence over the future of the school and is designed to assist these individuals in reflecting upon the effectiveness of the school's leadership. Responses should clearly illustrate the ways in which this leadership impacts the viability and sustainability of the institution. A school's Institutional Leadership should address at least two separate functions: an oversight and governance function, which will be referred to as being discharged by the governing body throughout this document, and the executive function providing leadership of the day-to-day management of the school. This executive function will be referred to as being discharged by the Head of School throughout this document. A committee made up of at least the head of the governing body, the Head of School, and some members of the governing body should complete the questions within this section.

During the accreditation visit, the head of the governing body or owner and as many officers of the school's governing body as possible should be available to meet privately with the visiting team chair and/or institutional leadership evaluator to discuss the structural elements of the governing body that both ensure a system of checks and balances and provide for strategic decision-making. The Head of School should be available to meet privately with these individuals as well. It is the school's responsibility to show convincingly that the leadership structure and operations meet the following Major Standard, Good Practices and Elements.

Who was responsible for this section of the report?

Major Standard

The school's institutional leadership operates with a structure that includes at least two separate entities which carry out the separate functions of governance and of day-to-day management. The structure provides for oversight and planning adequate to sustain the school's mission and vision and for institutional decision-making based upon a system of checks and balances that assures the school's long term viability.

Good Practice #11: The school has established itself as an independent school by operating with an institutional leadership structure that includes at least two separate entities which carry out the separate functions of governance and day-to-day management.

- 11.1:** Who has legal authority over the school?
- 11.2:** Describe the school's governance structure.
- 11.3:** Describe any boards, groups, individuals, or other entities that have a substantial influence over the school. Discuss the working relationship between these entities and the school, any influence exercised by these entities over the management of resources, the nature of any rights or powers that these entities hold, and the circumstances under which those rights and powers may be exercised.

Element #11a: The school is legally incorporated.

- 11a.1:** Have the school's articles of incorporation been changed since the last visit (*for accredited schools*) or in the last eight years (*for schools going through their first visit*)? If so, what changes were made and why?

Good Practice #12: The school has defined the roles and responsibilities of its governing body.

- 12.1:** What are the basic roles and responsibilities of the school's governing body?
- 12.2:** What are the committees, task forces, and ad hoc committees of the school's governing body and what is the purpose of each committee, task force, and ad hoc committee?
- 12.3:** What are the governing body goals for the current year and how were they developed?
- 12.4:** How frequently does the school's governing body meet? For how long?

Element #12a: The school's governing body is functioning in accordance with its bylaws.

- 12a.1:** Are there ways in which the governing body operates in a manner inconsistent with its bylaws? If so, describe.
- 12a.2:** When were the bylaws last reviewed and by whom?
- 12a.3:** What substantive changes were made and why?

Element #12b: The governing body has a conflict of interest policy.

- 12b.1:** What is the governing body's conflict of interest policy? If possible, provide a recent example of how it was utilized.
- 12b.2:** Please describe any potential conflicts of interest among members of the school's governing body (familial, financial, professional, and employment-related relationships) and describe how potential conflicts of interest are managed.
- 12b.3:** If there are voting members of the governing body not chosen by the school's governing body, describe how potential conflicts of interest are managed.

Element #12c: Policies and procedures are in place to provide for continuity of leadership of the governing body.

- 12c.1:** How is this leadership identified, selected, and oriented?
- 12c.2:** What are the current terms for governing body leadership?

Good Practice #13: The school's governing body is of appropriate size and composition to meet its roles and responsibilities and the needs of the school.**Element #13a: The school's governing body has policies and procedures in place for establishing its membership.**

- 13a.1:** Describe the target size and composition for the school's governing body and give the rationale for each.
- 13a.2:** Is the current makeup of the school's governing body adequate to meet the goals of the school's governing body? If not, what are the Board's plans to reach the target size and composition?
- 13a.3:** What qualities or skills does the school's governing body seek in its members?

Good Practice #14: The school's institutional leadership provides a balance of authority between the governing body and Head of School.

- 14.1:** Describe the balance of authority between the governing body and the Head of School and provide a recent illustration of how this balance works in practice.
- 14.2:** If the organization is part of a larger corporate structure, what is the nature of the Head of School's involvement in its decision-making process?

Good Practice #15: The Head of School and the school's governing body have developed an effective working relationship.

- 15.1:** Describe the working relationship between the school's governing body and the Head of School.
- 15.2:** Describe the working relationship between the Head of School and the leader of the school's governing body. How often do they meet? What kinds of issues are discussed?

- 15.3: Describe how the school's governing body communicates its expectations of the Head of School regarding school operations and program.
- 15.4: How are any concerns of the school's governing body communicated to the Head of School?

Good Practice #16: The Head of School is responsible for operating the school in accordance with the authority conferred by the governing body.

- 16.1: What are the basic roles and responsibilities of the Head of School?
- 16.2: Describe how the Head of School guides and supports the work of the school's governing body.
- 16.3: Describe how the Head of School guides and supports the administrative work of the school.
- 16.4: Describe how the Head of School guides and supports the educational work of the school.
- 16.5: What are the Head of School's goals for the current year and describe the process by which they were developed?

Good Practice #17: The school has a strategic plan covering a three to five year period that is approved by the governing body.

- 17.1: When did the school's governing body approve the current strategic plan? Outline the process by which it was developed.
- 17.2: Describe the process by which the school's governing body assesses progress on the strategic plan?
- 17.3: Describe any emerging issues not addressed in the strategic plan that may affect the future of the school and the plans to address these issues.

Good Practice #18: The school's institutional leadership has processes to assess and improve the effectiveness of school's governing body and of the Head of School

Element #18a: The governing body has procedures for its self-evaluation.

- 18a.1: Describe the process by which the school's governing body evaluates itself.
- 18a.2: How often does this evaluation take place?
- 18a.3: How are the results of the evaluation used?
- 18a.4: Describe a recent change or action that came about as a result of this self-evaluation?

Element #18b: The school's governing body keeps records of its meetings, committees and policies and communicates its decisions appropriately, while keeping its deliberations confidential.

- 18b.1: Provide an overview of the ways in which the school's governing body maintains adequate records of its meetings and the meetings of its committees. (See *Documents To Be Provided* at the end of this section)
- 18b.2: What expectations does the school's governing body have about the confidentiality of its deliberations?
- 18b.3: In what way does the school's governing body communicate its role, responsibilities, and actions to the school community?

Element #18c: The school's governing body has policies and procedures in place for orienting and educating its members.

- 18c.1: How are members of the school's governing body oriented to the school and educated about their responsibilities and the ethics of trusteeship?
- 18c.2: What provisions are made for keeping members of the school's governing body abreast of how the program is fulfilling the philosophy and mission of the school, issues of management of the school, critical issues facing the school, and concerns in the broad field of education?

Element #18d: The governing body has procedures for the evaluation for the Head of School.

- 18d.1:** Describe the process by which the Head of school is evaluated.
- 18d.2:** How often does this evaluation take place?
- 18d.3:** How are the results of the evaluation used?
- 18d.4:** Describe a recent change or action that came about as a result of this evaluation?
- 18d.5:** Describe the process for the periodic review of the Head of School's contract and compensation?

Element #18e: The Head of School engages in ongoing professional development.

- 18e.1:** What expectations and provisions are there for the ongoing professional development of the Head of School?
 - **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the area of institutional leadership?**
 - **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of institutional leadership?**

Documents To Be Provided To The Team Chair, Vice Chair, Governance Evaluator and PNAIS

Prior to the Visit:

- Copies of the Bylaws and the Articles of Incorporation
- A copy of the Strategic Plan
- A copy of the school's governing body's policy manual/handbook
- A list of current school's governing body members, their various affiliations to the school, and their tenures on the board
- Agendas and minutes for three consecutive recent school's governing body meetings
- The agendas and minutes from the school's recent governing body committees
- Sections of the Head's contract dealing with issues of evaluation, renewal, and termination

Finance

This section is intended to assist the school in the review of its financial structure and long term sustainability. The committee should include at least one member of the governing body and other individuals working outside the business office.

Who was responsible for this section?

Major Standard

The school's financial operations, resources and planning are adequate to support the school's mission and vision and to sustain the school's long-term viability and stability.

Good Practice #19: The school has a financial base that provides for the school's long-term viability and stability.

Element #19a: The school has adequate annual financial resources to sustain the school's program.

- 19a.1:** Discuss the adequacy of the school's finances to support the mission of the school.
- 19a.2:** Describe the major non-tuition revenue streams for the school and include the percentage each represents of the total revenue income.
- 19a.3:** What monies are set aside in a reserve fund for (a) emergencies (b) physical plant replacement?
- 19a.4:** What is the school's policy for investment of endowment and surplus cash? Who developed it? How is it implemented and monitored?
- 19a.5:** Identify any current financial risks that may affect the school's viability within the next three to five years. If such risks exist, what are the plans to address each element of risk?

Element #19b: The school forthrightly and regularly communicates its financial status.

- 19b.1:** In what ways does the school communicate its financial status with the governing body? with employees? With parents? With donors?

Good Practice #20: The school has policies and follows practices sufficient for the school's governing body to provide oversight and guidance regarding financial operations and risk management.

- 20.1:** Describe the composition of the group (for example: finance committee) that oversees the school's financial management. In what ways are group members familiar with accounting procedures and internal controls related to school finance?
- 20.2:** Describe the relationship between those administratively responsible for financial management and those exercising governance responsibility.
- 20.3:** Describe the role of the finance committee of the school's governing body and how it relates to the operation of the school. OR Describe the relationship between the owners of the school and any staff members or consultants responsible for the school's financial management.
- 20.4:** Is the insurance coverage (risk management) of the school reviewed for adequacy by the school's governing body on a periodic basis?
- 20.5:** What are the strengths of the financial management of the school?

Element #20a: The school has a budgeting process that is approved and monitored by the school's governing body.

20a.1: Describe the procedures for the development and monitoring of the budget.

Good Practice #21: The school has a three to five year long-range financial plan approved by the governing body that supports the school's strategic plan.

21.1: Describe how the most recent long-range financial plan was developed.

21.2: Describe the process by which the school assesses progress on the long-range financial plan.

Good Practice #22: The school completes a full independent financial audit for the fiscal year prior to the accreditation evaluation.

(Note: Should this audit not be available for the visiting team, the previous year's full financial audit or financial review may be reviewed during the visit. However, the school will not be given unconditional accreditation until the full financial audit for the fiscal year prior to the accreditation evaluation and the school's response to the issues raised in the management letter are reviewed and approved by the team.)

22.1: Describe the school's audit and financial review schedule and the rationale for this schedule.

22.2: How is the school's auditor chosen? Who approves the engagement of the auditing firm?

22.3: To whom are the findings of the audit or financial review presented?

22.4: If the school received a management letter, what steps have been taken to address the recommendations outlined in the management letter?

Good Practice #23: Auxiliary services are appropriately supervised, funded, and mission appropriate.

23.1: Describe how the school decides which auxiliary services are offered?

23.2: Describe the purposes and objectives of each auxiliary service (transportation, food service, bookstore, extended day, summer program, etc.) and how each service fits into the mission of the school.

23.3: How are the auxiliary services staffed and funded?

23.4: Discuss the impact on the operating budget of each of these services.

23.5: How does the school evaluate whether or not an auxiliary service is meeting its purpose and objective?

23.6: What are the major strengths of the auxiliary services as they stand?

23.7: What recommendations does the school make in this area?

- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the area of finance?**
- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of finance?**

Documents To Be Provided To The Team Chair, Vice Chair, Finance Evaluator and PNAIS Prior to the Visit:

- Copies of the latest audit along with the management letter and school's response to the issues raised in the management letter
- Documents that communicate the school's financial status (annual reports, newsletters, etc.)
- A three year history of prior budgets and end of year results
- The current year's budget
- The current interim financial statement
- A cash flow analysis for last year and a projection for the current year
- Published salary scales for faculty and staff (if applicable) OR average salary by experience
- The latest long-range financial plan
- Copies of the investment and endowment policies
- A summary of insurance and surety bonds

School Program

In keeping with the Association's desire that the accreditation process serve as a tool for reflection and school improvement, this section is designed so that a school will take a clear-sighted and thoughtful look at its overall school program. Committee members chosen to work on this section will serve their school well by assessing and recommending the ways in which the current program can be enhanced. Such an approach will be most beneficial to the self-study process and to the school's progress beyond accreditation.

Good Practices #24-#27 ask the school to describe and evaluate its overall program from a whole school perspective. The school should establish a separate committee to address the questions for **Good Practices #24-#27**, whose goal is to frame a "big picture" view of the school's overall program. This committee should consist of individuals representing the various components of the school program: curricular and co-curricular, including athletic, outdoor education, and information services (library, technology, media, etc.).

Good Practices #28-#30 ask for a greater level of detail and depth about each aspect of a school's overall program through its constituent parts. To accomplish this, the school should select a perspective or a combination of perspectives that comprehensively depict all aspects of its overall school program. Some possible perspectives include age levels, grade levels, divisions, and subject area. A school might choose a grade level perspective for its lower school while choosing a departmental perspective for its middle and upper schools. This flexibility is intended to let a school define the most inclusive approach to describing, evaluating, and reflecting upon its program. Whichever framework is chosen, it should embrace all elements of the school's overall program: curricular and co-curricular, including athletic, outdoor education, and information services (library, technology, media, etc.).

In editing the final document, the school should avoid overlap of information in **Good Practices #28-#30** that was included in **Good Practices #24-#27**.

Who was responsible for this section of the report?

Major Standard

The school's program is congruent with the school's mission, philosophy, and goals, and is in keeping with the PNAIS commitment to free and open inquiry in a humane and diverse society.

Good Practice #24: The school's overall program stems from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

- 24.1:** What are the significant characteristics and primary objectives of the school overall program and how are they congruent with the school's mission?
- 24.2:** What beliefs and assumptions about how students learn inform...
 - 24.2.a:** The design of the overall program?
 - 24.2.b:** The approaches to teaching and curriculum development?
 - 24.2.c:** The structure of the school day and the school year?
 - 24.2.d:** The school's philosophy regarding the role of information services (technology, library, media, etc.)?
- 24.3:** What opportunities does the school provide for communication, coordination, and integration between departments/grade-levels, etc? Please provide recent examples.

Good Practice #25: The school's overall program is designed to provide students with a school experience that is in keeping with PNAIS's commitment to free and open inquiry in a humane and diverse society.

25.1: In what ways does the overall program...

25.1.a: Promote free and open inquiry?

25.1.b: Promote ethical development?

25.1.c: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

Good Practice #26: The school's overall program is supported with sufficient resources to meet its mission and goals.

26.1: How are the school day and year planned so as to be of sufficient duration to meet program goals and also so as to be in compliance with state requirements for length of school year?

26.2: What are the primary factors that influence how the school determines the current number of faculty and staff for the educational program? When was this process last reviewed?

26.3: How are the funding priorities of the overall program determined?

26.4: How are resources allocated for information services (library, technology, media, etc.)?

26.5: If the school is not able to furnish sufficient resources (information services, faculty, staff, materials or equipment) to meet the goals of the overall program, what are the plans to address this challenge?

Good Practice #27: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of its overall program.

27.1: What procedures are in place to determine and evaluate the efficacy of the overall program?

27.2: Based upon the surveys conducted, what are the overall program's strengths and weaknesses from the perspective of...

27.2.a: Faculty, staff, and administration?

27.2.b: Parents, students, and alumni?

27.3: In what ways has the information from these surveys influenced the school's review, development, and future plans for its program?

27.4: What is the process for developing a new program? Describe a recent example of the development of a new program or the revision of an existing program.

NOTE: Please insert a brief statement explaining how the school has chosen to organize its approach to Good Practices #28-#30 (e.g. by age, grade, division, subject area, etc.). Each grouping must respond to the individual questions for Good Practices #28-#30. The school's response to this section should be sure to cover all components of the school's overall program – curricular and co-curricular. Be sure to avoid overlap of information included in GP #24-#27.

Good Practice #28: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

28.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

28.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

28.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

28.3.a: The design of your particular program?

28.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

28.4: In what way does your particular program...

28.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

28.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

28.4.c: Promote ethical development?

28.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

- 28.5:** If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?
- 28.6:** How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

Good Practice #29: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

- 29.1:** What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?
- 29.2:** How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?
- 29.3:** If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

Good Practice #30: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

- 30.1:** How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?
- 30.2:** What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?
- 30.3:** What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?
- 30.4:** What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?
- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**
 - **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

Documents to be Provided:

- School Calendar
- School Daily Schedule
- Scope and sequence, curriculum map or curriculum description not already provided in self study
- School's acceptable use policy for computers

Residential Program

This section is intended to assist in the review of the school's residential program. The committee should include individuals not living in the school dormitories. While some questions below are repeated in other sections of the self study, the committee should provide answers that relate only to the residential program.

Who was responsible for this section of the report?

Major Standard

The residential program operates in a way that provides a balanced, enriched, and mission consistent experience for students.

Good Practice #31: The residential program has articulated its beliefs and assumptions about how students learn and has a written curriculum, with defined goals and objectives, that addresses the needs of the residential students.

- 31.1:** Describe the residential curriculum. What does the school want students to learn through residential life?
- 31.2:** How does the program help students to learn about themselves and about working with others?
- 31.3:** In what ways does the residential environment, including dining and housing design, support the philosophy of the residential curriculum?
- 31.4:** What opportunities do students have to attend religious services?
- 31.5:** Describe the system for formal and informal communications with parents concerning the experience of students in the residential program.

Element #31a: Evening, weekend and vacation activities are consistent with the goals and objectives of the residential curriculum.

- 31a.1:** What are the purposes and objectives of the evening, weekend, and vacation activities?
- 31a.2:** Describe the evening, weekend, and vacation activities that are offered and how the school decides to offer these activities.
- 31a.3:** How are these activities funded and staffed?
- 31a.4:** How does the school evaluate whether or not an activity is meeting its purpose and objective?
- 31a.5:** What is the availability of academic facilities on evenings and weekends?
- 31a.6:** How are "short breaks" handled for students who are unable to go home?

Good Practice #32: The residential program is integrated into the total life of the school.

- 32.1:** How are non-residential faculty members involved in the residential program for students?
- 32.2:** For schools with day/boarding programs:
 - 32.2.a:** How does the school approach the two constituencies? Is there one norm for both or separate norms?
 - 32.2.b:** How are day students integrated into the residential program?
 - 32.2.c:** What is the policy regarding student (day or residential) use of automobiles on campus? When off campus?
 - 32.2.d:** What rules apply when residential students visit day students in their homes? Is there an expectation of adult presence?
 - 32.2.e:** How are residential life rules communicated to day students and day parents?

Element #32a: The school provides for the needs of international students.

- 32a.1:** Describe the program elements that are in place to assist international students in making the transition into the social, academic, and cultural environment of the school.
- 32a.2:** How does the school go about the business of maintaining their cultural integrity and addressing their cultural needs?
- 32a.3:** What provision is made for travel to and from home?

Good Practice #33: Residential staff members are qualified by preparation and/or experience to meet the needs of students under their supervision.

- 33.1:** Describe the process for selecting and assigning residential staff.
 - 33.2:** What orientation and training is provided for residential staff?
 - 33.3:** How are residential staff supervised and evaluated?
 - 33.4:** Describe the workload of residential staff, both in and out of the dormitory. How does the school address the choices faculty may need to make in prioritizing dormitory and other duties?
 - 33.5:** Describe how dormitory staff access and communicate with advisors, counseling resources and health services concerning residential students.
 - 33.6:** What provision is made for faculty to request to move out of the dormitory? What incentives are given to encourage faculty to stay in the dormitory?
 - 33.7:** Provide a chart showing adult residential coverage for a seven-day period?
 - 33.8:** Provide a list showing the years of residential experience of all dorm parents.
- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the residential program?**
 - **What recommendations does the school make in the area of the residential program?**

Administrative Practice and Personnel

This section is intended to assist in the review of the school's administrative structure and practices. The committee should include representatives of faculty, staff, and administration.

A member of the Visiting Team should meet with the officers of the Parents' Association and/or a representative group of parents and with representative alumni of the school or officers of the alumni association if one exists.

Who was responsible for this section of the report?

Major Standard

The school has a staff that is qualified by preparation and/or experience and an effective organizational structure to carry out school policy and to conduct the school program in accordance with its mission.

Good Practice #34: The school has the administrative staff and structure sufficient to carry out the operational needs of the school.

Element #34a: The School engages in ongoing development, review, and evaluation of school operations to meet the needs of the school.

- 34a.1:** In what ways does the administration review its own practices? Who initiates this review and who is involved?
- 34a.2:** What does the administration see as its major strengths and weaknesses, i.e. administrative structure, policies, and procedures?
- 34a.3:** From the perspective of the faculty and staff surveys conducted, what are the major strengths of the administration, i.e. administrative structure, policies, and procedures?
- 34a.4:** What additional resources does the school need to accomplish its administrative goals?
- 34a.5:** What problems does the school face in addressing the need for these additional resources?

Element #34b: Provision is made for the appropriate participation of faculty and staff in the school's administrative planning and decision-making processes.

- 34b.1:** List the kinds of faculty and staff meetings that regularly occur over the course of an academic year. What is their frequency? How is the agenda devised and what issues are discussed.

Element #34c: The school has sufficient staff and structure to fulfill the following administrative functions: Development/Alumni, Business, and Enrollment Management.

- 34c.1:** Describe the goals and the staff organization for each administrative function. How are these goals developed?
- 34c.2:** Does each administrative function have its own long-range plan? If so, describe the planning and review process.
- 34c.3:** Are the resources (personnel, funding, time, materials, and equipment) of each administrative function adequate to meet the department's goals. If not, why not?
- 34c.4:** Is the school's technology infrastructure adequate to meet the needs of each administrative function? If not, why not?
- 34c.5:** Describe the communication between each administrative function and the following groups, as appropriate: members of the board of trustees, the school head and other academic administrators, other administrative departments, and the faculty.
- 34c.6:** Describe the communication between each administrative function and the following groups: the parents' association and the school's alumni.

- 34c.7: Describe the evaluation process by which the effectiveness of each administrative function department is measured.
- 34c.8: Describe the growth of the school's fundraising base. (Development office only)
- 34c.9: Is the school seeking capital funds at this time? If so, describe the planning and purpose for this capital campaign. (Development office only)
- 34c.10: What are the major strengths of each department?
- 34c.11: What recommendations does the school make for each department?

Good Practice #35: The school has clear hiring policies and protocols that are effectively communicated.

Element #35a: Faculty, administration, and staff members are qualified by preparation or experience.

- 35a.1: Describe the way in which faculty, staff, and administration are hired.
 - 35a.1.a: How are positions advertised or posted?
 - 35a.1.b: What is the interview process?
 - 35a.1.c: How is the final decision on hiring made?
 - 35a.1.d: How is the effectiveness of the hiring process assessed
- 35a.2: What criteria are used to determine the qualifications of candidates? How are these criteria assessed?
- 35a.3: What orientation and mentoring is provided for new employees?
- 35a.4: What additional support and supervision is provided for those new to their profession?

Element #35b: The school makes a concerted effort to address the issue of diversity through hiring of staff appropriate to its mission statement and its definition of diversity.

- 35b.1: Describe the school's goals regarding diversity in the faculty and staff and how the school plans to meet them.

Good Practice #36: The school reviews its compliance with applicable federal and state laws regarding hiring and the maintenance of adequate personnel records.

- 36.1: Describe the process by which the school conducts background checks on new employees.
- 36.2: Describe the contents of a personnel file.
- 36.3: Where are these files located?
- 36.4: Who has access to them? What guidelines for access are provided?
- 36.5: Who is responsible for maintenance of these records?
- 36.6: How are the records physically secured against fire, misplacement, loss or unauthorized access?
- 36.7: What is the school's policy for the retention of personnel records?

Good Practice #37: The school has written personnel policies including descriptions of the evaluation and compensation systems.

Element #37a: The school carries out a system for supervision and evaluation of staff performance that is defined as to purposes (formative and summative) and that protects the individual's rights as well as the interests of the school in an ethical manner. The process is understood by members of the staff.

- 37a.1: Describe the system for supervision and evaluation of faculty, staff, and administration.
- 37a.2: How well does the school practice the evaluation process here described?
- 37a.3: Describe the review and grievance procedures designed to address disagreement over performance assessment?

Element #37b: The professional staff receives from the administration ongoing supervision and assistance designed to improve instruction.

- 37b.1:** Describe the ways in which the administration provides ongoing supervision and assistance designed to improve instruction and performance.

Element #37c: The school has a compensation system that enables the school to attract and retain sufficient staff to operate its program.

- 37c.1:** What is the school's compensation program and how was it determined?
- 37c.2:** How often has it been reviewed and are there plans for possible change?

Good Practice #38: The school provides, on a regular basis, opportunities for staff professional development.

- 38.1:** Describe the processes by which opportunities for staff professional development are encouraged.
- 38.2:** Describe the professional development opportunities (including conferences, publications, travel and leave) in which faculty/staff have participated during the last two years.
Provide specific examples of professional development opportunities for faculty and staff related to diversity.
- 38.3:** What is the size of the school's professional development budget for each of the last two years?
- 38.4:** How does the allocation of these funds support the school's mission and philosophy?

Good Practice #39: The school has an effective communication system in place to keep parents informed about the school's program and services.

- 39.1:** What is the process for assuring full and timely communication of both routine information and situations of concern?
- 39.2:** What is the school's communications system (print and electronic) and how can it be improved?

Good Practice #40: The school has established policies and procedures for members of the school community to participate in the life of the school**Element #40a: Parents receive adequate orientation and are afforded opportunities to participate in appropriate school events and activities.**

- 40a.1:** Describe the ways in which the school orients and integrates its new families.
- 40a.2:** In what ways does the school allow for parent participation in school events and activities?
- 40a.3:** Describe briefly the parents' organization and activities: how they function, frequency and type of meetings, special purposes and projects.
- 40a.4:** Describe the extent of parent participation in school life.
- 40a.5:** From the perspective of the surveys conducted, what do parents feel are the greatest strengths and weaknesses of the school?
- 40a.6:** In what ways did this input influence the school's review and/or development of the overall school?

Element #40b: The school provides channels for parents to raise questions and/or express concerns.

- 40b.1:** What channels are open for parents, students, faculty, and staff to reflect concerns?
- 40b.2:** What is the appeal process if a parent feels that a concern has not been resolved?
- 40b.3:** What grievance policies are in place?
- 40b.3.a:** Where are they published?
- 40b.3.b:** What is the mechanism for final appeal?

Element #40c: Alumni participate in the school community.

- 40c.1:** What efforts have been made by the school to determine the effectiveness of the preparation of its graduates?
- 40c.2:** How does the school encourage alumni participation in the life of the school beyond fundraising?
- 40c.3:** How are alumni apprised of the developments within the school community?
- 40c.4:** How do alumni contribute to the school's growth and development?
- 40c.5:** If the school conducted a survey of its alumni/ae, what did the alumni/ae feel are the greatest strengths and weaknesses of the school? In what ways did this input influence the school's review and/or development of the overall school?

Good Practice #41: The School interacts constructively with the community in which it is located and avails itself of community resources.

- 41.1:** For the purposes of this section, "community" is defined as the area within which the school has a perceptible effect. Define in your terms the community within which this school has a "perceptible effect." What is the effect?
- 41.2:** What is the school's philosophy with regard to interaction with the community?
- 41.3:** How does the school contribute to the surrounding community?
- 41.4:** What community resources does the school draw upon to contribute to the school program?
- 41.5:** What steps has the school taken to describe itself, its purposes and objectives to the local community?
- 41.6:** What are the major strengths of the school's interactions with the larger community? What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to issues of the school community?
- **What are the school's strengths in the area of administrative practices and personnel?**
 - **What recommendations does the school make in the area of administrative practices and personnel?**

Documents To Be Provided:

- Non-discrimination statement for the hiring of faculty and staff
- Samples of communications between the school and parents and alumni
- Copy of parent handbook, if applicable
- List of all teachers along with their professional preparation (degrees and major/minor) and current teaching areas and/or administrative responsibilities
- Written job descriptions for all school administrators and staff along with their professional preparation (degrees and major/minor)
- Copies of a teacher contract and personnel policy handbook
- Copies of any forms used in the faculty and staff evaluation process
- Copies of the agendas and/or minutes for three consecutive faculty and administrative meetings

Students

This section is intended to assist in the review of the school's ability to attract mission appropriate students while also making sure the school meets the needs of its enrolled students. Committee participation by faculty and staff not involved in admissions and counseling would be beneficial.

Who was responsible for this section of the report?

Major Standard

The school has defined those qualities that constitute a "mission appropriate" student, has established policies and procedures for enrollment management that are in keeping with federal non-discrimination regulations, and provides for the welfare of its students.

Good Practice #42: The school has an established enrollment management program.

Element #42a: The school has defined what constitutes a mission appropriate student

- 42a.1:** How was this definition determined? By whom?
- 42a.2:** What steps are taken to assess the appropriateness of this definition?
- 42a.3:** Describe what measures or predictors of success the admissions office uses in determining the appropriateness of an acceptable student?

Element #42b: The school has defined what constitutes a diverse student body in accordance with the school's mission and its geographic community. (See Good Practice #6)

- 42b.1:** Describe the school's definition of diversity in ways that are meaningful to the school (e.g. race, ethnicity, ability, achievement, socio-economic background, special talents and interests, disabilities, parental education and occupation, exchange students, etc.).
- 42b.2:** Describe the school's goals regarding diversity in the student body.
- 42b.3:** Describe the population of the area(s) from which the school draws students, including the racial and ethnic composition of this population?
- 42b.4:** In what ways does the composition of the student body match the school's diversity goals? If these goals are not being met, what plans does the school have to meet these goals?

Element #42c: The school's procedures for admission of students are consistent with the stated purposes, objectives, and enrollment targets of the school.

- 42c.1:** Outline the school's recruitment efforts highlighting those efforts that are most successful.
- 42c.2:** Describe the policies and procedures for the admission of students.
- 42c.3:** In what ways does the school address the issue of diversity in its enrollment management program?
- 42c.4:** What school qualities or characteristics attract pupils and their families to your school?
How have you found out this information?
- 42c.5:** Describe this year's enrollment targets for each grade or age group. How were they determined and by whom?
- 42c.6:** If these targets were not reached, what plans are there for meeting these goals next year?

Element #42d: The school clearly communicates its procedures for admission of students.

- 42d.1:** In what ways are these admission procedures clearly communicated?
- 42d.2:** When were these publications last revised and what changes were made?

Element #42e: The school clearly communicates the school's philosophy and offerings regarding financial aid and other financing options and has an established policy regarding the allocation of financial aid.

- 42e.1: What is the school's philosophy regarding its tuition financing options?
- 42e.2: Describe the various financing options offered by the school and the goals for each financing option?
- 42e.3: Describe the school's policies, priorities, and procedures for the awarding of each financing option.
- 42e.4: What procedures are followed to be sure that these financing options are awarded in accordance with stated policies?
- 42e.5: In what ways are these financing options promoted?
- 42e.6: Outline the school's tuition policies, including tuition insurance and/or refund policies. When and how are these policies made available to all parents?

Element #42f: The school has established institutional (internal) research procedures for tracking admission and financial aid activity.

- 42f.1: Provide a chart showing the total enrollment at each grade level or age grouping, the number of inquiries, applications, acceptances, new students, and attrition for each level for each of the past five years. Comment on any admission or attrition trends and relevant information about the local context. (*See Appendix B*)
- 42f.2: Provide a chart showing the amount of need-based financial aid, merit awards, and tuition remission awarded in each grade, the number of students receiving each type of tuition discount, the average grant, and the number of new grants for each of the past three years. Comment on any trends and relevant information about the local context. (*See Appendix C*)
- 42f.3: What percentage of the student body has received each tuition discount over the past three years?

Good Practice # 43: The school has developed the necessary services to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of its students.

Element #43a: The school attends to the personal and academic development of its students.

- 43a.1: Describe the school's advising and counseling program. How are each staffed?
- 43a.2: What guidance does the school provide students and parents about the next steps in a student's educational career?

Element # 43b: There are clear and effective procedures for the assessment and communication of student progress.

- 43b.1: Explain how student achievement and behavior is assessed and communicated.
- 43b.2: Describe the rationale for the type of report used to communicate student achievement.
- 43b.3: If standardized tests or other school-wide assessment tools are used, how are they interpreted and for what purposes are they used?

Element #43c: There are clear and effective processes for the reasonable accommodation of students with disabilities.

- 43c.1: How does the school learn of a student's special needs or disability?
- 43c.2: How is information about a student's disability used to determine whether reasonable accommodation is necessary to enable the student to meet the school's requirements or access the school's facilities and/or programs?

- 43c.3: What reasonable accommodations does the school make to meet the special needs of individual students with disabilities? How are parents or others involved in the process of deciding what reasonable accommodations should be made? How are the accommodations communicated to students, parents, and school staff?
- 43c.4: Does the school have any special programs or equipment specifically designed to reasonably accommodate the needs of students with disabilities? If so, please describe.

Good Practice #44: The school has a system for the maintenance of accurate records for both current and former students

- 44.1: Describe the contents of a student's current cumulative record file.
- 44.2: Describe any records kept on groups of current students.
- 44.2.a: Where are these files located?
- 44.2.b: Who has access to them? What guidelines for access are provided?
- 44.2.c: Who is responsible for maintenance of these records?
- 44.3: How are the records physically secured against fire, misplacement, loss or unauthorized access?
- 44.4: What is the school's policy for the retention of school records?
- 44.5: What information is maintained in a student's permanent file?
- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to students?**
 - **What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to students?**

Documents To Be Provided:

- A full set of admissions materials and any other materials, typically given to families, which address tuition discounts, and financing options
- Any enrollment contracts or agreements
- Copy of student handbook, if applicable
- Sample report card and/or progress report
- School profile used for secondary school or college placement purposes, if appropriate

School Plant

This section is intended to assist the school in reviewing the adequacy of its physical plant. The committee should include members of the faculty and administration.

Who was responsible for this section of the report?

Major Standard

The school's plant is adequate to support the mission and program and is maintained in a way that is intended to provide a safe and healthy environment.

Good Practice #45: The school gives appropriate priority to operating its buildings, equipment, and grounds in a safe manner.

- 45.1:** Describe the school's inspection of the facility, playground equipment, playfields, and vehicles.
- 45.2:** Describe the school's policies and practices for compliance with OSHA standards, including safe seismic storage, labeling, and disposal of toxic materials. How and by whom are compliance decisions made, communicated, and implemented?

Element #45a: The school demonstrates that it meets code and regulatory standards related to the use of its physical plant.

- 45a.1:** The school should review with the Visiting Team copies of recent reports related to the school's physical plant from any regulatory agency. If the school is out of compliance in any of these areas, the school should share its plans to gain compliance.
- 45a.2:** Describe the school's processes for assuring that the school's buildings and facilities are in compliance with federal and state requirements regarding access for persons with disabilities.

Good Practice #46: The school demonstrates an ability to sustain the school's current plant and location for a three to five year period, or alternatively, has a realistic and sustainable plan for change of plant or location.

- 46.1:** Describe plans for the ongoing maintenance, replacement, or improvement of the current school facilities. Who is responsible for the oversight of these plans?
- 46.2:** Does the school have a plan for changing its facilities within the next three to five years? If so, what are they? Describe the priorities of this plan and how they were developed.
- 46.3:** If the school leases its campus or facility, what are the terms of the lease and what are the plans for managing the lease? What are the constraints of the lease?

Good Practice #47: The school demonstrates long-range facilities planning that is incorporated into the school's strategic and long-range financial plans and addresses plant maintenance, improvement or expansion as correlated with projected enrollment, program growth, or institutional development and change. (See *Institutional Leadership Good Practice #17* and *Finance Good Practice #21*)

- 47.1:** Describe the respective roles of the administrative staff and the governing body in relation to decisions affecting the physical plant.
- 47.2:** What are the long-range facilities issues facing the school?

Element #47a: The school demonstrates annual and long-range budgeting practices and adequate asset allocation to support plant occupancy, maintenance, and safety.

- 47a.1:** Discuss the functional adequacy of the physical plant and its appropriateness to the educational program of the school.

- What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the school plant?
- What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to the school plant?

Documents To Be Provided:

- Campus Master Plan, if appropriate
- Recent reports related to the school's physical plant from any regulatory agency

Health and Safety

This section is intended to assist in the review of policies and practices related to health and safety. The committee should include those who are involved with health and safety issues both on campus and off campus.

It is recommended that schools that have extensive outdoor/wilderness programs request a safety audit through the Outdoor Program Coordinators Committee schools within two years of the visit and submit that report along with the self study. Alternatively, it is recommended that the school request a person with outdoor education expertise be included on the visiting team.

Who was responsible for this section?

Major Standard

The school has established and effectively implemented policies and procedures that promote a safe and healthy school environment.

Good Practice #48: The school provides supervision and instruction with the goal of reducing hazards to health and safety.

- 48.1:** Articulate the underlying beliefs about the school's supervision of students.
- 48.2:** Indicate how the students are supervised within the buildings, on the playgrounds, and as they come and go from the campus.
- 48.3:** How does the school regulate traffic on or near the campus? Describe student drop-off and pick-up procedures and how these procedures provide for the safety of students.
- 48.4:** List the school's guidelines regarding safe student conduct on playgrounds and athletic fields. Describe other means the school employs to create awareness of safety rules, to prevent injury, to identify and remove hazards, etc.
- 48.5:** Describe the health and safety training programs offered to and required of faculty and staff.

Good Practice #49: The school has written emergency response and crisis procedures and practices them.

- 49.1:** Describe preparations for emergency response in the event of natural disaster, traumatic event or other crises.
- 49.2:** Who is responsible for the oversight of these procedures and how are faculty and staff trained in these procedures?

Good Practice #50: The school has written procedures to deal with injury and illness that are shared with faculty, staff, parents, and students.

- 50.1:** In what ways does the school collect medical information for each student?
- 50.2:** Describe the school's procedure for dealing with injuries and sudden illness. What are the ordinary first-aid procedures? Who is responsible for treating minor injuries and for determining a course of action in the case of more serious ones? What provision does the school make for a student who becomes sick during the school day?

Good Practice #51: The school regularly reviews procedures dealing with health and safety.

- 51.1:** How are health and safety plans documented, reviewed, updated?
- 51.2:** In what ways are staff made aware of and trained in these procedures?
- 51.3:** In what ways are faculty educated about the need to comply with local and state child protection guidelines?

51.4: If the school operates a pre-school program, is it operating in compliance with state requirements?

Element #51a: Provision is made for the health care and safety of students while involved in school activities.

51a.1: What practices and/or procedures are in place to provide for the health and safety of students within the school? If the school has a residential program, what additional steps has the school taken to provide for the health and safety of students within this program? If these policies and procedures are in a handbook, provide a copy of this handbook and state the date of the last review or revision of the handbook.

51a.2: Describe the policies and procedures for the storage and administration of medication for students.

51a.3: Are first aid supplies readily available?

51a.4: Various off-campus activities (e.g. outdoor/experiential education, field trips) often have health/safety concerns that are different from the general health/safety concerns within the school. These activities deserve their own plan and evaluation. Briefly describe each of these programs including the following information:

- policies and procedures specifically related to these programs, including periodic in-house safety reviews, accident reporting procedures and documentation, and insurance coverage
- procedures for review of appropriateness, safety, condition and upkeep of equipment including vehicles, and/or facilities used for such programs
- policies regarding transportation for these activities
- procedures for contacting parents in emergency situations
- methods of review and evaluation of the health and safety of these programs

51a.5: If there are school vehicles used to transport students, what does the school do to review compliance with state and federal codes and to address issues of non-compliance

51a.6: Describe the steps taken to address the major issues, if any, outlined in the external safety review.

- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the area of health and safety?**
- **What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to the area of health and safety?**

Documents To Be Provided:

- External safety review, if appropriate.
- Any handbooks containing policies and/or procedures addressing the health and safety of students
- Any state licenses or permits required for the school's operation within its state (state approval, pre-school licenses) and/or childcare.

Appendix A**School Profile**

Name of School _____

City _____ State _____

Grade Range _____ Division Structure (if applicable) _____

Founding Date _____

Size of Board _____ Current Board Chair _____

Date of Appointment _____ Length of Term _____

Current Head _____ Date of Appointment _____

Brief Description of Campus, Facilities, and Surrounding Community.

Total Number of Employees (full-time) _____ (part-time) _____

In completing the following items, count each employee only once.

- Administrators (full-time) _____ (part-time) _____
- Teaching Staff (full-time) _____ (part-time) _____
- Non-teaching staff (full-time) _____ (part-time) _____

Total Opening Enrollment for _____ Academic Year _____

Enrollment at last accreditation visit _____

What is total budget _____

What percentage of total revenue comes from: (percentages should add up to 100%)

- Tuition _____
- Annual Gifts _____
- Investment/Interest Income _____
- Other _____

Provide Tuition Range for the academic year of the self study: _____

Tuition Reductions (include financial aid, tuition remission, and merit awards)

- Amount of Tuition Reductions awarded in the academic year of the self study _____
- Tuition Reductions as a percentage of gross Tuition Revenue _____
- Percentage of students receiving tuition reductions _____

Appendix B

Student Enrollment and Admissions

1. Complete the chart below, using enrollments as of opening of school.
2. If the school is ungraded, use reasonable equivalents.
3. Explain any unusual variations in enrollments.

Enrollment	Inquiries				Applications				Acceptances				New Students				Attrition			
	grade	year	year	year	year	last	this	year	year	last	this	year	last	this	year	last	this	year	last	this
ps																				
k																				
1																				
2																				
3																				
4																				
5																				
6																				
7																				
8																				
9																				
10																				
11																				
12																				
Tot																				

Appendix C

Student Tuition Reductions

Complete the chart below for each form of tuition reduction (need-based financial aid, merit awards, and tuition remission) for the past three years.

Total Aid

Recipients

Average Grant

New Grants

grade	year	200 - -	Previous year	Most recent year	200 - -	Previous year	Most recent year	200 - -	Previous year	Most recent year	200 - -	Previous year	Most recent year
ps													
k													
1													
2													
3													
4													
5													
6													
7													
8													
9													
10													
11													
12													
Tot													

Appendix D**PNAIS Visiting Team Voting Report**

The Visiting Team should vote on each major standard. Record the number of votes in each column. A copy of this sheet must be included with the letter of transmittal, but should not be shared with the school.

School Name:				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Major Standard
				Major Standard for Accreditation Process The school has demonstrated a commitment to on-going school improvement through the successful completion of each step of the PNAIS accreditation process.
				Major Standard for Association Philosophy The philosophy, principles, and practices of PNAIS schools are consistent with a free, open, humane, and diverse society; schools provide an intellectual environment in which students are encouraged to express individual points of view and to examine and debate all sides of a subject.
				Major Standard for School Mission The school has a clear mission statement, philosophy, and goals.
				Major Standard for Institutional Leadership The school's institutional leadership operates with a structure that includes at least two separate entities, which carry out the separate functions of governance and of day-to-day management. The structure provides for oversight and planning adequate to sustain the school's mission and vision and for institutional decision-making based upon a system of checks and balances that assures the school's long-term viability.
				Major Standard for Finance The school's financial operations, resources and planning are adequate to support the school's mission and vision and to sustain the school's long-term viability and stability.
				Major Standard for School Program The school's program is congruent with the school's mission, philosophy, and goals, and is in keeping with the PNAIS commitment to free and open inquiry in a humane and diverse society.
				Major Standard for Residential Program The residential program operates in a way that assures a balanced, enriched, and mission consistent experience for students.
				Major Standard for Administrative Practice and Personnel The school has a qualified staff and an effective organizational structure to carry out school policy and to conduct the school program in accordance with its mission.
				Major Standard for Students The school has defined those qualities that constitute a "mission appropriate" student, has established policies and procedures for enrollment management that are in keeping with federal non-discrimination regulations, and provides for the welfare of its students.
				Major Standard for School Plant The school's plant is adequate to support the mission and program and is maintained in a way to assure a safe and healthy environment.
				Major Standard for Health and Safety The school has established and effectively implemented policies and procedures that ensure a safe and healthy school environment.

Visiting Team Checklist for Assessing Good Practices and Elements

Voting on Good Practices and Elements is not necessary. Rather, the visiting team should use this checklist as a way of keeping track of a school's compliance with each item. The following guidelines should be followed in writing the various report sections.

Guidelines for Writing Recommendations and Suggestions

Failure to meet a **major standard** results in a condition for an accredited member and non-accreditation for a candidate member. The condition should be described in the letter of transmittal. Partial compliance of a major standard results in a major recommendation with the possibility of a condition.

Failure to meet a **good practice** results in at least a recommendation if not a major recommendation. Partial compliance of a good practice results in a recommendation with the possibility of a major recommendation.

Failure to meet an **element** results in a recommendation. Partial compliance of an element would result in a recommendation.

Additionally, the visiting team should write a recommendation if there is a lack of congruence between what the school says it does and what team members observed.

PNAIS Accreditation Process Major Standard

The school has demonstrated a commitment to on-going school improvement through the successful completion of each step of the PNAIS accreditation process.

— **Good Practice #1:** The school has reviewed its mission statement as the starting point in the self-study process.

— **Good Practice #2:** The school has conducted a self-study that provides for broad participation of the school community and full disclosure in the examination of strengths and weaknesses.

— **Element #2a:** The school has provided for broad participation in the self study by surveying its faculty and staff, students, parents, and, if appropriate, alumni.

— **Good Practice #3:** The school has addressed all major recommendations from its previous accreditation visit (only for schools going through re-accreditation).

Association Philosophy Major Standard

The philosophy, principles, and practices of PNAIS schools are consistent with a free, open, humane, and diverse society; schools provide an intellectual environment in which students are encouraged to express individual points of view and to examine and debate all sides of a subject.

— **Good Practice #4:** The school follows applicable non-discriminatory policies and practices.

— **Good Practice #5:** The school operates in a way that promotes student freedom of inquiry, diversity of viewpoints, and independent critical thinking.

_____ **Element #5a:** The school climate is characterized by mutual respect for persons and property.

_____ **Good Practice #6:** The school has, through its governing body, defined what diversity means for the school.

_____ **Good Practice #7:** The school sustains a commitment to respond to the demands of a diverse society.

School Mission Major Standard

The school has a clear mission statement, philosophy, and goals.

_____ **Good Practice #8:** The school's governing body and staff understand and support the school's mission, philosophy and goals.

_____ **Good Practice #9:** The school effectively communicates the school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals.

_____ **Good Practice #10:** The school evidences in its program(s) and operations the school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals, all of which are appropriate to meet the needs of the students it serves.

Institutional Leadership Major Standard:

The school's institutional leadership operates with a structure that includes at least two separate entities which carry out the separate functions of governance and of day-to-day management. The structure provides for oversight and planning adequate to sustain the school's mission and vision and for institutional decision-making based upon a system of checks and balances that assures the school's long term viability.

_____ **Good Practice #11:** The school has established itself as an independent school by operating with an institutional leadership structure that includes at least two separate entities which carry out the separate functions of governance and day-to-day management.

_____ **Element #11a:** The school is legally incorporated.

_____ **Good Practice #12:** The school has defined the roles and responsibilities of its governing body.

_____ **Element #12a:** The school's governing body is functioning in accordance with its bylaws.

_____ **Element #12b:** The governing body has a conflict of interest policy.

- _____ **Element #12c:** Policies and procedures are in place to provide for continuity of leadership of the governing body.
- _____ **Good Practice #13:** The school's governing body is of appropriate size and composition to meet its roles and responsibilities and the needs of the school.
- _____ **Element #13a:** The school's governing body has policies and procedures in place for establishing its membership.
- _____ **Good Practice #14:** The school's institutional leadership provides a balance of authority between the governing body and Head of School.
- _____ **Good Practice #15:** The Head of School and the school's governing body have developed an effective working relationship.
- _____ **Good Practice #16:** The Head of School is responsible for operating the school in accordance with the authority conferred by the governing body.
- _____ **Good Practice #17:** The school has a strategic plan covering a three to five year period that is approved by the governing body.
- _____ **Good Practice #18:** The school's institutional leadership has processes to assess and improve the effectiveness of school's governing body and of the Head of School.
 - _____ **Element #18a:** The governing body has procedures for its self-evaluation.
 - _____ **Element #18b:** The school's governing body keeps records of its meetings, committees and policies and communicates its decisions appropriately, while keeping its deliberations confidential.
 - _____ **Element #18c:** The school's governing body has policies and procedures in place for orienting and educating its members.
 - _____ **Element #18d:** The governing body has procedures for the evaluation for the Head of School.
 - _____ **Element #18e:** The Head of School engages in ongoing professional development.

Finance Major Standard

The school's financial operations, resources and planning are adequate to support the school's mission and vision and to sustain the school's long-term viability and stability.

- _____ **Good Practice #19:** The school has a financial base that provides for the school's long-term viability and stability.
- _____ **Element #19a:** The school has adequate annual financial resources to sustain the school's program.

- _____ **Element#19b:** The school forthrightly and regularly communicates its financial status.
- _____ **Good Practice #20:** The school has policies and follows practices sufficient for the school's governing body to provide oversight and guidance regarding financial operations and risk management.
- _____ **Element#20a:** The school has a budgeting process that is approved and monitored by the school's governing body.
- _____ **Good Practice #21:** The school has a three to five year long-range financial plan approved by the governing body that supports the school's strategic plan.
- _____ **Good Practice #22:** The school completes a full independent financial audit for the fiscal year prior to the accreditation evaluation.
- _____ **Good Practice #23:** Auxiliary services are appropriately supervised, funded, and mission appropriate.

School Program Major Standard

The school's program is congruent with the school's mission, philosophy, and goals, and is in keeping with the PNAIS commitment to free and open inquiry in a humane and diverse society.

- _____ **Good Practice # 24:** The school's overall program stems from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.
- _____ **Good Practice #25:** The school's overall program is designed to provide students with a school experience that is in keeping with PNAIS's commitment to free and open inquiry in a humane and diverse society.
- _____ **GP#26:** The school's overall program is supported with sufficient resources to meet its mission and goals.
- _____ **GP#27:** The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of its overall program.
- _____ **GP#28:** The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.
- _____ **GP#29:** The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.
- _____ **GP#30:** The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

Residential Program Major Standard

The residential program operates in a way that provides a balanced, enriched, and mission consistent experience for students.

— **Good Practice #31:** The residential program has articulated its beliefs and assumptions about how students learn and has a written curriculum with defined goals and objectives that addresses the needs of the residential students.

— **Element #31a:** Evening, weekend and vacation activities are consistent with the goals and objectives of the residential curriculum.

— **Good Practice #32:** The residential program is integrated into the total life of the school.

— **Element #32a:** The school provides for the needs of international students.

— **Good Practice #33:** Residential staff members are qualified to meet the needs of students under their supervision.

Administrative Practice and Personnel Major Standard

The school has a staff that is qualified by preparation and/or experience and an effective organizational structure to carry out school policy and to conduct the school program in accordance with its mission.

— **Good Practice #34:** The school has the administrative staff and structure sufficient to carry out the operational needs of the school.

— **Element #34a:** The school engages in ongoing development, review, and evaluation of school operations to meet the needs of the school.

— **Element #34b:** Provision is made for the appropriate participation of faculty and staff in the school's administrative planning and decision-making processes.

— **Element #34c:** The school has adequate staff and structure to fulfill the following administrative functions: Development/Alumni, Business, and Enrollment Management.

— **Good Practice #35:** The school has clear hiring policies and protocols that are effectively communicated.

— **Element #35a:** Faculty, administration, and staff members are qualified by preparation or experience.

- _____ **Element #35b:** The school makes a concerted effort to address the issue of diversity through hiring of staff appropriate to its mission statement and its definition of diversity.
- _____ **Good Practice #36:** The school reviews its compliance with applicable federal and state laws regarding hiring and the maintenance of adequate personnel records.
- _____ **Good Practice #37:** The school has written personnel policies including descriptions of the evaluation and compensation systems.
- _____ **Element #37a:** The school carries out a system for supervision and evaluation of staff performance that is defined as to purposes (formative and summative) and that protects the individual's rights as well as the interests of the school in an ethical manner. The process is understood by members of the staff.
- _____ **Element #37b:** The professional staff receives from the administration ongoing supervision and assistance designed to improve instruction.
- _____ **Element #37c:** The school has a fair and equitable compensation program.
- _____ **Good Practice #38:** The school provides, on a regular basis, opportunities for staff professional development.
- _____ **Good Practice #39:** The school has an effective communication system in place to keep parents informed about the school's program and services.
- _____ **Good Practice #40:** The school has established policies and procedures for members of the school community to participate in the life of the school.
 - _____ **Element #40a:** Parents receive adequate orientation and are afforded opportunities to participate in school events and activities.
 - _____ **Element #40b:** The school provides channels for parents to raise questions and/or express concerns.
 - _____ **Element #40c:** Alumni participate in the school community.
- _____ **Good Practice #41:** The School interacts constructively with the community in which it is located and avails itself of community resources.

_____ **Students Major Standard**

The school has defined those qualities that constitute a "mission appropriate" student, has established policies and procedures for enrollment management that are in keeping with federal non-discrimination regulations, and provides for the welfare of its students.

- _____ **Good Practice #42:** The school has an established enrollment management program.

- _____ **Element #42a:** The school has defined what constitutes a mission appropriate student.
- _____ **Element #42b:** The school has defined what constitutes a diverse student body in accordance with the school's mission and its geographic community.
- _____ **Element #42c:** The school's procedures for admission of students are consistent with the stated purposes, objectives, and enrollment targets of the school.
- _____ **Element #42d:** The school clearly communicates its procedures for admission of students.
- _____ **Element #42e:** The school clearly communicates the school's philosophy and offerings regarding financial aid and other financing options and has an established policy regarding the allocation of financial aid.
- _____ **Element #42f:** The school has established institutional (internal) research procedures for tracking admission and financial aid activity.
- _____ **Good Practice #43:** The school has developed the necessary services to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of its students.
- _____ **Element #43a:** The school attends to the personal and academic development of its students.
- _____ **Element #43b:** There are clear and effective procedures for the assessment and communication of student progress.
- _____ **Element #43c:** There are clear and effective processes for the reasonable accommodation of students with disabilities.
- _____ **Good Practice #44:** The school has a system for the maintenance of accurate records for both current and former students.

School Plant Major Standard

The school's plant is adequate to support the mission and program and is maintained in a way that is intended to provide a safe and healthy environment.

- _____ **Good Practice #45:** The school gives appropriate priority to operating its buildings, equipment, and grounds in a safe manner.
- _____ **Element #45a:** The school demonstrates that it meets code and regulatory standards related to the use of its physical plant.

— **Good Practice #46:** The school demonstrates an ability to sustain the school's current plant and location for a three to five year period, or alternatively, has a realistic and sustainable plan for change of plant or location.

— **Good Practice #47:** The school demonstrates long-range facilities planning that is incorporated into the school's strategic and long-range financial plans and addresses plant maintenance, improvement or expansion as correlated with projected enrollment, program growth, or institutional development and change.

— **Element #47a:** The school demonstrates annual and long-range budgeting practices and adequate asset allocation to support plant occupancy, maintenance, and safety.

— **Health and Safety Major Standard**

The school has established and effectively implemented policies and procedures that promote a safe and healthy school environment.

— **Good Practice #48:** The school provides supervision and instruction with the goal of reducing hazards to health and safety.

— **Good Practice #49:** The school has written emergency response and crisis procedures and practices them.

— **Good Practice #50:** The school has written procedures to deal with injury and illness that are shared with faculty, staff, parents, and students as appropriate.

— **Good Practice #51:** The school regularly reviews procedures dealing with health and safety.

— **Element #51a:** Provision is made for the health care and safety of students while involved in school activities.

Accreditation**Mailed to****On Site**

	Visiting Team Report from the last evaluation and any Response Reports if applicable (<i>For team chair and vice chair prior to preliminary visit</i>)	Chair & Vice Chair	
	Copies of the school's PNAIS Annual Reports for the past five years (<i>For team chair and vice chair prior to preliminary visit</i>)	Chair & Vice Chair	
	School Profile (see Appendix A – include as 1 st page of self study)	✓	
	Mission Statement and supporting philosophy and goal statements (include as 2 nd page of self study)	✓	
	Brief history of the school (include as 3 rd page of self study)	✓	✓
	Copies of surveys used to gather information from various constituencies		✓

Institutional Leadership

	The school's By Laws and the Articles of Incorporation	Chair, Vice Chair, Governance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	The school's Strategic Plan	✓	✓
	Governing body's policy manual/handbook	Chair, Vice Chair, Governance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	List of current governing body members, their various affiliations to the school, and their tenures on the board	Chair, Vice Chair, Governance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Agendas and minutes for three consecutive recent governing body meetings	Chair, Vice Chair, Governance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Agendas and minutes from recent governing body committees	Chair, Vice Chair, Governance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Sections of Head's contract dealing with issues of evaluation, renewal, and termination	Chair, Vice Chair, Governance Evaluator & PNAIS	

Finance

	The latest audit along with the management letter and school's response to the issues raised in the management letter	Chair, Vice Chair, Finance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Documents that communicate the school's financial status (annual reports, newsletters, etc.)	Chair, Vice Chair, Finance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Three year history of prior budgets and end of year results	Chair, Vice Chair, Finance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Current year's budget	Chair, Vice Chair, Finance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Current interim financial statement	Chair, Vice Chair, Finance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Cash flow analysis for last year and a projection for the current year	Chair, Vice Chair, Finance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Published salary scales for faculty and staff (if applicable) OR average salary by experience	Chair, Vice Chair, Finance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Latest long-range financial plan	Chair, Vice Chair, Finance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Copies of the investment and endowment policies	Chair, Vice Chair, Finance Evaluator & PNAIS	
	Summary of insurance and surety bonds	Chair, Vice Chair, Finance Evaluator & PNAIS	

Master List of Documents to be Provided (continued) September 2010 version

School Program

		Team	On Site
	School calendar	✓	
	School daily schedule	✓	
	Scope and sequence, curriculum map or curriculum description not already displayed in the self study		✓
	School's acceptable use policy for computers		✓

Administrative Practice and Personnel

	Non-discrimination statement for the hiring of faculty and staff	✓	
	Samples of communications between the school and its parents and alumni		✓
	Copy of parent handbook, if applicable		✓
	List of teachers along with their professional preparation (degrees and major/minor) and current teaching areas and/or administrative responsibilities		✓
	Copies of a teacher contract and personnel policy handbook		✓
	Copies of any forms used in the faculty and staff evaluation process	✓	
	Written job descriptions for all school administrators and staff along with their professional preparation (degrees and major/minor)		✓
	Copies of the agendas and/or minutes for three consecutive faculty and administrative meetings	Chair, Vice Chair	✓

Students

	A full set of admissions materials and any other materials, typically given to families, which address tuition, tuition discounts, and financing options	✓	
	Any enrollment contracts or agreements		✓
	Copy of student handbook, if applicable		✓
	Sample report card and/or progress report	✓	
	School profile used for secondary school or college placement purposes, if appropriate	✓	

School Plant

	Campus Master Plan, if appropriate		✓
	Recent reports related to the school's physical plant from any regulatory agency		✓

Health and Safety

	External Safety Review, if appropriate		✓
	Any handbooks containing policies and/or procedures addressing the health and safety of students		✓
	Any state licenses or permits required for the school's operation within its state (state approval, preschool licenses) and/or childcare		✓

Appendix F

School Assessment of PNAIS Major Standards and Good Practices Leading to and Maintaining Accreditation

September 2010 version

To assess your school's readiness to move from one category to another or to begin the self study, read the following expectations relating to our three categories of affiliation and determine where your school is relative to each expectation in *all three* columns. Please indicate your level of compliance on the line below each expectation using the following symbols:

- + = Currently meeting expectation
- = Close to meeting expectation
- 0 = Currently not meeting expectation

Introductory Statement

PNAIS is committed to helping its schools improve the quality of the educational program they offer their students. For this reason, PNAIS has established major standards as an integral tool for assisting schools with this process. Each Major Standard is accompanied by a set of expectations for each category of PNAIS affiliation. A school seeking to move from one category of affiliation to another should be meeting all of the expectations outlined in its current category and all of the expectations of the category into which they wish to move before gaining that affiliation status. An Accredited Member not meeting all of the Major Standards will be granted a conditional accreditation.

Expectations followed by a parentheses including a GP and number (for example, GP 1) indicates that these expectations are Good Practices in the PNAIS self study manual. An expectation not followed by a GP indicates that the expectation represents an earlier developmental stage of another expectation that is a Good Practice.

PNAIS Major Standards and Expectations Leading to and Maintaining Accreditation

Major Standard	Expectations	Expectations	Expectations
Accreditation Procedures	<i>A Subscriber School...</i>	<i>A Candidate Member...</i>	<i>An Accredited Member...</i>
The school has demonstrated a commitment to on-going school improvement through the successful completion of each step of the PNAIS accreditation process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains a desire to gain accreditation, exhibits an ongoing commitment to school improvement and renewal, and successfully completes the PNAIS Annual Report after its first year of being a Subscriber School. Utilizes PNAIS Major Standards and Good Practices for guidance in the overall development of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates the ability to meet all PNAIS major standards within a five-year period with the aim of becoming an accredited member. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews its mission statement as the starting point in the self study process. (GP 1) Conducts a self-study that provides for broad participation of the school community and full disclosure in the examination of strengths and weaknesses. (GP 2)
Association Philosophy			

Major Standard	Expectations	Expectations	Expectations
Mission	A Subscriber School...	A Candidate Member...	An Accredited Member...
<p>The school has a clear mission statement, philosophy, and goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates a mission statement, philosophy, and goals that serve as the basis for the development of the school and its educational program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidences in its program(s) and operations the school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals, all of which are in print and are appropriate to meet the needs of the students it serves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a governing body and staff that understand and support the school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals. (GP 8)
<p>Effectively communicates the school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals. (GP 9)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively communicates the school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals. (GP 9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidences in its program(s) and operations the school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals, all of which are in print and are appropriate to meet the needs of the students it serves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a governing body of appropriate size and composition to meet its roles and responsibilities and the needs of the school. (GP 13)
<p>Institutional Leadership</p>	<p>The school's institutional leadership operates with a structure that includes at least two separate entities which carry out the separate functions of governance and of day-to-day management. The structure provides for oversight and planning adequate to sustain the school's mission and vision and for institutional decision-making based upon a system of checks and balances that assures the school's long term viability.</p>	<p>Has a founding governing body sufficient in number, expertise, and resources to develop and promote the school's mission and vision consistent with the principles of PNAIS and protect the school's implementation of that mission and vision from undue interference and inappropriate influence and control from stakeholders within the school as well as from third parties outside of the school..</p>	<p>Has a governing body sufficiently developed to make policy and embark on long range planning which will assure the school's continued growth and ability to serve students in the foreseeable future.</p>
		<p>Has established itself as an independent school with an institutional leadership structure that includes at least two separate entities which carry out the separate functions of governance and day-to-day management. (GP 11)</p>	<p>Has a governing body that engages in both short-term and long-term planning. (GP 17)</p>
	<p>Has defined the roles and responsibilities of its governing body. (GP 12)</p>	<p>Has institutional leadership that provides a balance of authority between the governing body and Head of School. (GP 14)</p>	<p>School's institutional leadership has processes to assess and improve the effectiveness of school's governing body and of the Head of School. (GP 18)</p>
		<p>Has a Head of School and a governing body that have developed an effective working relationship. (GP 15)</p>	
		<p>Has a Head of School who is responsible for operating the school in accordance with the authority conferred by the governing body. (GP 16)</p>	

Major Standard	Expectations	Expectations	Expectations
Finance	A Subscriber School...	A Candidate Member...	An Accredited Member...
The school's financial operations, resources and planning are adequate to support the school's mission and vision and to sustain its long term viability and stability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operates on an annual budget approved and monitored by the governing body. Is developing policies and practices for the governing body to meet its fiduciary responsibilities with regard to finance and risk management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has adequate annual financial resources to sustain the school's program. Has a collaborative budgeting process that is approved and monitored by the governing body. Has policies and follows practices sufficient for the school's governing body to provide oversight and guidance regarding financial operations and risk management. (GP 20) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a financial base that provides for the school's long-term viability and stability. (GP 19) Has a three to five year long-range financial plan that supports the school's strategic plan. (GP 21) Has completed a full independent financial audit for the fiscal year prior to the accreditation evaluation. (GP 22) Has auxiliary services that are appropriately supervised, funded, and mission appropriate. (GP 23)

Major Standard	Expectations <i>A Subscriber School...</i>	Expectations <i>A Candidate Member...</i>	Expectations <i>An Accredited Member...</i>
<p>The school's program is congruent with the school's mission, philosophy, and goals and is in keeping with the PNAIS commitment to free and open inquiry in a humane and diverse society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops the school's program in accordance with the school's stated mission, philosophy, and goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals. (GP 29) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's overall program stems from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn. (GP 24)

Major Standard	Expectations <i>A Subscriber School...</i>	Expectations <i>A Candidate Member...</i>	Expectations <i>An Accredited Member...</i>
Residential Program The residential program operates in a way that provides a balanced, enriched, and mission consistent experience for students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has articulated its beliefs and assumptions about how students learn in its residential program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is developing its residential curriculum with defined goals and objectives that adequately meet the needs of the residential students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a residential program that has articulated its beliefs and assumptions about how students learn and has a written curriculum with defined goals and objectives that addresses the needs of the residential students. (GP 31) Has a residential program that is integrated into the total life of the school. (GP 32) Has a residential staff qualified by preparation and/or experience to meet the needs of students under their supervision. (GP 33)
Administrative Practice and Personnel The school has a staff that is qualified by preparation and/or experience and an effective organizational structure to carry out school policy and to conduct the school program in accordance with its mission.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has clear hiring policies and protocols that are effectively communicated. (GP 34) Is developing an adequate administrative staff and structure to meet the operational needs of the school. Reviews its compliance with applicable federal and state laws regarding hiring and the maintenance of adequate personnel records. (GP 36) Is developing an effective communication system to keep parents informed about the school's program and services. Has written personnel policies, a rudimentary evaluation system, and has initiated an ongoing professional development program. Has an effective communication system in place to keep parents informed about the school's program and services. (GP 39) Provides, on a regular basis, opportunities for staff professional development. (GP 38) Has established policies and procedures for members of the school community to participate in the life of the school. (GP 40) Interacts constructively with the community in which it is located and avails itself of community resources. (GP 41)

Major Standard	Expectations <i>A Subscriber School...</i>	Expectations <i>A Candidate Member...</i>	Expectations <i>An Accredited Member...</i>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has defined those qualities that constitute a "mission appropriate" student, has established policies and procedures for enrollment management that are in keeping with federal non-discrimination regulations, and provides for the welfare of its students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has defined and continually reviews what constitutes a "mission appropriate" student and has started work on the development of its admission policies and procedures. Has a system for the maintenance of accurate records for both current and former students. (GP 44) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has defined what constitutes a diverse student body in accordance with the school's mission and its geographic community. Has started articulating what support services its students may need. Has developed the necessary services to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of its students. (GP 43)
School Plant			
Health and Safety			