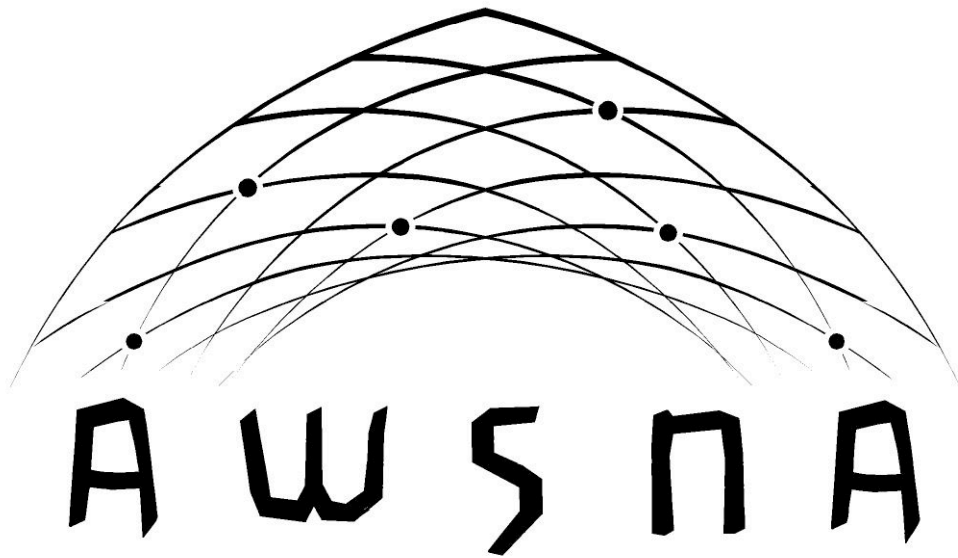


# **AWSNA School Evaluation / Accreditation Guide**



**December 2010 Version**

**Association of Waldorf Schools of North America**

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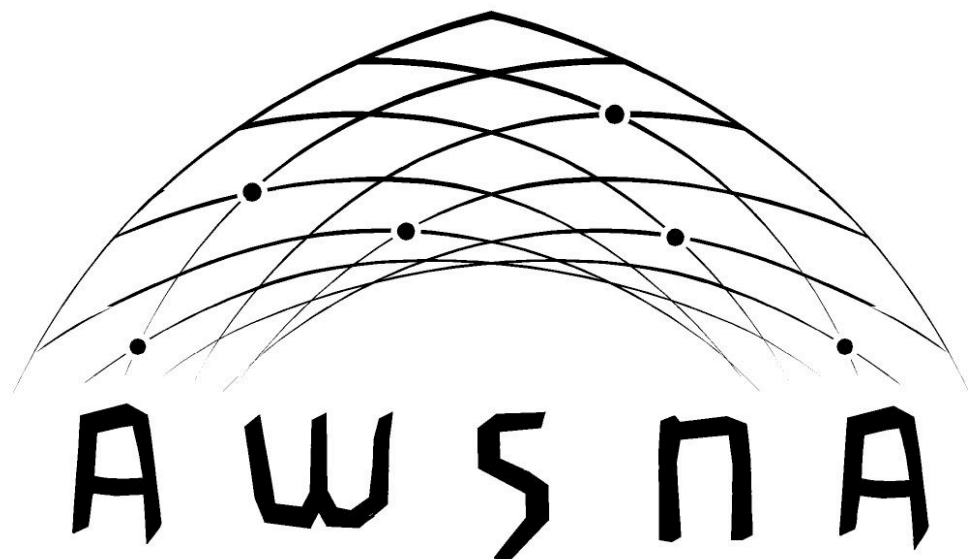
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# Part I: Procedures and Principles of School Evaluation / Accreditation



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## **Part I: Procedures and Principles of School Evaluation/Accreditation**

### **Preface**

The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America is a not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to protect, encourage, and further Waldorf education and to aid and assist each affiliated institution to improve the quality of the education it offers. In addition to over 182 affiliated Waldorf schools and initiatives, there are kindergartens in North America working out of the pedagogical impulses of Rudolf Steiner and other groups doing preparatory work.

Schools can encompass parent-tot groups from birth age through high school. In addition, there are 15 teacher preparatory centers in North America affiliated with AWSNA.

In 1996, AWSNA was asked by its members to undertake designing an accreditation process in order to strengthen the schools in helping them to identify their challenges for the future. A task force was formed and the following is the result of their efforts. The Accreditation process is consistent with the purposes of AWSNA.

AWSNA offers many services to its schools and institutes such as: conferences and workshops; consultation on curriculum, child development, school organization, and finance; guidance for new and developing schools; research on ongoing curriculum developments; funding of teacher education loans; mentoring to help teachers achieve excellence; publication of newsletters, *Renewal* (an educational journal), and resource books on Waldorf education; and DANA (Development and Administrative Network of AWSNA) to provide sharing of expertise for fund-raising and administrative work at the schools.

An Evaluation/ Accreditation process is the newest of the AWSNA services offered to the schools. The goal is to strengthen Waldorf schools at various levels in their growth while maintaining the true and complete independence of each school.

AWSNA is indebted to the Independent Schools Association Central States for their work in developing materials and processes for school evaluation and accreditation. The AWSNA materials are based on those developed by ISACS and recognition and gratitude are hereby given to ISACS for allowing AWSNA to draw on the ISACS protocol in forming the AWSNA accreditation process.

### **An Overview of the Evaluation/Accreditation Program**

One of the principal functions of AWSNA is the evaluation and accreditation of its member schools, which, as independent not-for-profit schools, have voluntarily chosen to measure and guide their progress toward an ideal of educational excellence. In providing and developing *Shared Principles*, the association in no way limits, but strives to preserve, the freedom of each individual school to practice within the indications of Waldorf education.

Independent schools differ from other non-public schools in that they generally have the following characteristics:

- They are governed by a board of trustees or directors.
- They are fiscally independent.
- They have a stated policy of nondiscrimination in admissions and employment.
- They are recognized in the U.S. by the Internal Revenue Service as non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations, or have the equivalent non-profit status in Canada or Mexico.
- They are approved through a recognized evaluation process.

While AWSNA member schools may, and do, vary some in their interpretation of Waldorf education, if they seek accredited status, they are all subject to certain means of accountability including the following:

- They must satisfy their constituencies concerning the quality of their educational program and services since enrollment of students and voluntary financial support depend upon such satisfaction.
- They must meet the published Shared Principles of AWSNA (see section on AWSNA Shared Principles), which include statements on corporate status, non-discriminatory enrollment and hiring policies and procedures as well as some specific requirements concerning the school's structure, governance, administration, faculty and staff, and overall program.
- They must demonstrate their commitment to quality and growth through participation in the seven-year cycle of the evaluation process as established by AWSNA.

The AWSNA evaluation/accreditation program has the following schedule of components:

1. The school applies to the Association using Appendix A as a guide to enter one of the two cycles available each year; September 28 and February 15 are deadlines for applications.
2. In the one to two years preceding the visitation, the school undergoes a comprehensive self-study, and identifies its strengths, weaknesses, and areas requiring further study.
3. The school is visited by an evaluation team chaired by an experienced school administrator or teacher and composed of teachers and administrators competent to assess the various aspects of the school. The leader and the team members are, for the most part, nominated by AWSNA. The team may include representatives from the private and public sector (public schools, universities, and the state department of education, for example) as well as from other accrediting organizations.
4. The Visiting Team Report, based upon findings from the visitation and a comparison of these with the self-study, is sent to the school and is reviewed by the AWSNA Accreditation Review Committee. The ARC examines the Visiting Team Report, the school's Self-Study, and the Visiting Team's recommendation for accreditation status and, after deliberation sends the recommendation to the AWSNA delegates that meet semi-annually. The delegates affirm the ARC recommendation. (This body includes teacher and administrator representatives from full member schools. DANA members, the AWSNA Board of Trustees, the AWSNA Leadership Council, the AWSNA Executive Team, and the Pedagogical Section Council for North America also attend this meeting.)
5. The Report is reviewed by the school, and, within one year from the visitation, a Response Report/Action Plan is prepared by the school responding to major recommendations, indicating acceptance or reasons for disagreement, and outlining plans and personnel responsible for implementing the recommendations. The Response Report/Action Plan is reviewed by the Accreditation Review Committee and acted upon by the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator.
6. The school submits a Progress Report in the third year after the evaluation visit; this shows the progress made in implementing all the recommendations. The report is also reviewed by the Accreditation Review Committee and acted upon by the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator. Any deficiencies in the school's Response and Progress Reports, or concern over apparent lack of progress in implementing recommendations, are communicated promptly to the school, which is then held accountable for appropriate remediation within a specified period of time.
7. A re-evaluation (including the entire process above) is required every seven years or at other intervals as specified by the AWSNA accreditation status conferred.

Throughout the evaluation the school is closely monitored for its adherence to two fundamental principles, in addition to the specific published principles:

- Full and accurate disclosure of its mission, philosophy, program, qualifications of its professional staff, procedures, and services, and
- Congruence between the school's stated mission and its actual program and services.

These two fundamental standards are of paramount importance in view of the differences that may exist between individual member schools.

While accreditation (or some other form of approval, recognition, or licensing) can be obtained from other organizations, including state, provincial, the Canadian Education Standards Institute, and the six U.S. regional accrediting bodies, Waldorf schools often find the following specific advantages in the AWSNA evaluation/accreditation program:

- The process involves a peer review, conducted by those who understand and appreciate Waldorf and independent school qualities and contributions to education.
- The principles and procedures have been developed for independent Waldorf schools.
- Wherever possible, principles are directed towards the quality of the school process.
- In both philosophy and practice, the focus of the AWSNA evaluation/accreditation program is on the development and nurturing of excellence rather than certification. The principal objectives are to provide a stimulus for excellence, help the school assess its strengths and weaknesses, and help the school confirm the validity of its priorities and planning for growth.

## Categories of Affiliation with the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America

1. The **Shared Principles** are the foundation for membership in the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America.
2. There are **three membership categories**: Developing Member School, Candidate for Full Membership School, Full Member School. The schools in these categories are listed in the AWSNA directory and are asked to display their connection to the Association in their literature.
3. Individuals and groups that are not on a path to membership can support the Association through a category called "**Friends of AWSNA.**" At present, this category requires further clarification about possible fees and what the 'Friends' might receive, i.e., publications, conference notices, etc.
4. A **new initiative** seeking to work on the basis of Waldorf education will be asked to connect with WECAN (Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America). Early Childhood colleagues will be asked to support the development and growth of the initiative at this early stage.
5. **Developing School**: Once a school embarks on starting a grade school and wishes to be on the path to membership, it is expected to become a Developing School. The key element of its application to become a Developing School is a Three-Year Plan, which will be reviewed and approved by the regional delegate circle. A mentor team will visit the Developing Schools at least once a year and, based on each school's Three-Year Plan, will offer support and guidance. The Three-Year Plan needs to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.
6. **Candidate School**: Once a school is deemed ready by its mentoring team, it is expected to apply for candidacy. Candidacy includes an in-depth self-evaluation, a peer review and an on-site visit. This process will be overseen by the regional delegates' circle and be based on the AWSNA Self-Study document established for this purpose. Alternatively, a Candidate School can undergo the AWSNA Accreditation process.
7. **Full-Member School**: Every 7-10 years a Full Member school will engage in a self-study/peer review process, with a site visit being strongly encouraged. There are three options for meeting this requirement: A self-study/peer review based on the AWSNA

Self-Study document established for this purpose and overseen by the regional delegates' circle; AWSNA Accreditation; an alternative form of self-study/peer review proposed by the school and approved by the Leadership Council.

8. **Use of the service-marked terms WALDORF, STEINER and RUDOLF STEINER for educational services.** The terms **WALDORF, STEINER and RUDOLF STEINER for educational services** are federally registered service marks by AWSNA in the United States. In Canada these terms are registered service-marks, held by Waldorf School Association (WSAO) of Ontario. Upon acceptance into the Association as a Developing School, the school may use these terms in its name or by-line. The school must also use identify its membership status in AWSNA in either in its byline, literature and telephone greetings. AWSNA and WSAO have the sole legal authority over their use for educational services. WECAN Full Member Schools made also use these terms through a arrangement made between AWSNA/WSAO and WECAN. Please see [www.whywaldorfworks.com](http://www.whywaldorfworks.com) for the full guidelines.

The **Early childhood programs and high schools** will also be eligible for full membership in the Association.

## AWSNA Shared Principles

The following list of shared principles has been developed, and will be reviewed periodically, to describe the kind of school that AWSNA believes it can serve and that, in turn, can benefit from the AWSNA network and services. Accreditation by the association is assurance to the public that these shared principles have been met and that the school's success in meeting these shared principles is periodically reviewed.

A key principle of Waldorf education is the fundamental relationship between teacher and child. The success of this relationship depends upon the vital and living presence of a number of elements in the pedagogical life of the school. For each of these elements, a conscious and active use of anthroposophical methods is implicit. These elements include:

- A keen interest in and study of each child in the teacher's care;
- An on-going study of human development, especially as it relates to a teacher's specific classes;
- A commitment to community building and positive collegial working;
- A wide interest in a teacher's subject area and in the world as a whole;
- A commitment by the teacher to the cultivation of her/his own creative sources;
- An active practice of self-reflection by the teacher.

These *Shared Principles* have been developed to focus on the elements that should be common to all Waldorf schools. The approval of a school, however, for accreditation shall not be contingent upon literal compliance with every detail of the shared principles. Wherever the provisions of a particular principle are waived, however, there shall be sufficient evidence that the intent of those provisions is being observed.

It is believed that the ultimate test of a school's quality is the measure of how well the school does what it purports, represented by the degree of congruence between the school's mission and program, as well as between its purposes and results.

### A. Purpose, Goals, and Philosophy

**A1:** The school is an independent institution working out of the pedagogical indications of Rudolf Steiner, based on anthroposophy, the philosophy initiated by Rudolf Steiner.

**A2:** The statement of educational mission, philosophy, and goals that reflects the individual character of the school, based upon sound Waldorf educational tenet is clearly articulated.

**A3:** There is FULL DISCLOSURE of the school's mission, policies, programs, and practices.

**A4:** There is CONGRUENCE between the stated mission of the school and the actual program and practices of the school.

**A5:** The statement of educational mission, philosophy, and goals is understood and supported by the school community.

**A6:** The development and periodic review of the mission and vision of the school are a collective effort involving faculty, administrators, parents, board, and, if appropriate, students.

**A7:** The school teaches in an age-appropriate manner that rejects all forms of indoctrination of its students and lays the foundations for the capacities of creative and independent thinking.

**A8:** The school demonstrates its commitment to inclusiveness through its governance and leadership, curriculum, support programs, staffing, activities, and admission policies.

### B. Educational Program, Activities, and Student Services

**B1:** The faculty is responsible for the educational program of the school and strives continually to recreate and renew the Waldorf curriculum according to the indications of Rudolf Steiner. An understanding of these indications will be developed through the collegial workings of the full faculty and each individual faculty member.

**B2:** A central understanding is that the education meets the needs of the developing child according to the insights of Rudolf Steiner, the continuing work of Waldorf educators, and contemporary insights that are considered compatible and appropriate.

**B3:** The school promotes student development in thinking (cognitive), feeling (affective), and willing (psychomotor) in an age-appropriate manner by addressing the emerging individuality of the whole human being in both the process and the content of the curriculum.

**B4:** The educational program includes a sufficient diversity and recognition of resources to meet the capacities, learning styles, developmental needs, and cultural backgrounds of the students.

**B5:** The school's educational program includes a balance of language, math, natural science, social science, humanities, fine arts, practical arts, performing arts, physical education, and practical work experience as is appropriate for the age, needs, and abilities of students.

**B6:** The faculty is responsible for ensuring review, evaluation, and development of the curriculum on a regular basis.

**B7:** The faculty provides regular oral and written assessment of progress for each student at all age levels and shares these assessments with the family in an open and timely manner. The school is able to document appropriate information regarding student performance in its student records.

**B8:** The school provides adequate access to program support. This may include guidance services, special needs support, and health services.

**B9:** The educational program addresses the rhythmic element within each lesson, the day, the week, the month, and the year.

**B10:** The length of the school day and year is sufficient for the total school program and will meet all applicable legal requirements.

**B11:** The school maintains records for students containing information required by law and as necessary for the operation of a quality program.

**B12:** The school provides or has access to appropriate and sufficient instructional materials and equipment necessary for the requirements of the instructional program and the needs of the students.

**B13:** The school demonstrates that it provides sufficient access to quality library and/or media center facilities, or suitable alternatives, as indicated by accepted Waldorf practices.

**B14:** If there is a residential program, it is conceived and staffed to suitably fulfill that aspect of the school's program, particularly with respect to the portion of the day outside regular classroom hours. Applicable health and safety regulations are fully observed.

**B15:** The relationship between the school and any special programs it offers on a supplementary basis (summer sessions, student exchange, extra curricular, work experience, before- and after-school programs, special needs education, seminars, institutes, etc.) is fully disclosed. The operation of supplemental programs shall not be in conflict with the school's purpose.

### **C. School Governance, Administration, Finance, and Law**

**C1:** The school is incorporated as a not-for-profit organization and has been granted 501(c)(3) status by the Internal Revenue Service in the United States, or has the equivalent not-for-profit incorporation and tax-exempt status in Canada or Mexico.

**C2:** The school's governance structure is organized with sufficient independence from other organizations so as to ensure its ability to fulfill its mission and to control its own destiny.

**C3:** In developing its governance and administrative structures, the school takes into account relevant indications by Rudolf Steiner.

**C4:** The school is developed and organized so as to carry out policies effectively. It is responsible for the educational program, personnel, facilities, and resources, to include the employment of all teachers, staff and support personnel.

**C5:** The school provides clearly stated decision-making processes for the administration of the school, for strategic planning, for the periodic review of school organization, and for appropriate development of programs and services.



**C6:** The school has clearly defined programs for regular evaluation of the performance of administration, teachers, and staff, and understood procedures for non-renewal and termination of employment.

**C7:** The school is in compliance with all applicable laws regarding discrimination based on any and all protected categories, in all areas, including admissions, and employment.

**C8:** The school maintains facilities and equipment that are aesthetic and meet health, fire, safety, and sanitary standards.

**C9:** The school generates necessary resources for providing and maintaining physical facilities, equipment, and materials adequate to support the programs of the school.

**C10:** The school has appropriate procedures for management of financial resources, including process for annual budget-making, accounting, auditing such accounts, investing, and long-range planning.

**C11:** The school provides adequate fundraising, public relations, and financial management support to achieve the school's mission.

**C12:** The school provides an annual audit or review of its finances, prepared by a disinterested party or firm. For the fiscal year before the team visit, the school will provide a full opinion financial audit.

**C13:** The school periodically reviews and evaluates its processes of governance and administration.

**C14:** The school publishes a tuition and fee schedule appropriate to its operations and clientele and a refund policy that is communicated and meets legal and ethical considerations.

**C15:** The school implements appropriate policies and procedures regarding financial reporting and record keeping as necessary to its effective ethical and legal operations and is able to evidence that those records are kept in a safe and professional manner.

**C16:** The school complies with the required AWSNA septennial evaluation/accreditation program including a self-study, visitation by an AWSNA team, and prescribed follow-up activity and reports. (Schools in a ten-year cycle with another accrediting agency may request a variance.)

#### **D. Personnel**

**D1:** The administration, teachers, and staff are qualified for their positions and responsibilities by education and/or experience. Teachers have a formal preparation, or the equivalent, for Waldorf/Steiner teaching, or are engaged in such preparation.

**D2:** There are clear, established procedures for recruiting, screening, interviewing, hiring, supporting, evaluating, and dismissing personnel.

**D3:** There are fair and appropriate personnel policies, salaries and benefits for all personnel, and these policies are written and readily available to all co-workers.

**D4:** After mutual agreement as to compensation, term of employment, and principal duties and responsibilities, each teacher and staff member is informed in writing.

**D5:** The school has a clearly stated program for professional growth, including on-going mentoring.

**D6:** There are adequate procedures for identifying changing needs and priorities in teacher and staff requirements.

**D7:** Every teacher and staff member participates in a fair and regular form of evaluation.

**D8:** The school has a clearly articulated written policy for expectations of professional behavior.

**D9:** The school keeps accurate and complete personnel records as required by law and as necessary for its effective operations, which include professional qualifications and credentials.

#### **E. Community of the School**

**E1:** The school has an organization and procedures for effective communication with, and involvement of, parents, students, alumni, and friends of the school in a way that is appropriate to their interests and to the purposes and objectives of the school.

**E2:** The school has clearly defined and stated student admission and dismissal policies and procedures that are consistent with the stated mission and philosophy of the school and that provide the general criteria upon which admissions and dismissals are made.

**E3:** The school only enrolls students whose needs the faculty believes it can meet through the schools programs, services, and activities.

**E4:** Parents and guardians are fully informed of their financial and other responsibilities to the school prior to enrollment.

**E5:** The school has a clearly articulated and written policy of the expected and acceptable behavior of students and parents.

**E6:** The school publishes and follows clearly articulated communication policies and procedures, including grievance procedures.

**E7:** The school demonstrates that it provides adequate and competent supervision of all its students.

**E8:** Sufficient and appropriate disciplinary policies and procedures are implemented to provide for a safe and positive learning environment.

## WECAN MEMBERSHIP/AWSNA ACCREDITATION

The Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) has developed a process for full membership and renewal of full membership in WECAN. This process includes the meeting of WECAN's Shared Principles and a site visit. If the WECAN process is accomplished through the AWSNA accreditation process, the following applies:

- During the self-study phase, the early childhood department will follow the WECAN Shared Principles in the description and evaluation steps. Non-program topics should be annotated in the main text of the self-study document to ease the work of the WECAN representative on the visiting team.

The goals are to simplify the process for the school and to combine the processes to avoid duplication.

## WECAN SHARED PRINCIPLES

### *A. Purpose, Goals, and Educational Philosophy*

**A1:** In our work with children from pre-birth to age seven (in nursery-kindergartens, home care programs, child care centers, parent-child programs, etc.) we are committed to the ideals and practices of Waldorf/Steiner early childhood education.

**A2:** This education, developed by Rudolf Steiner and based on an anthroposophical understanding of the human individuality as a being of body, soul and spirit, offers protection and respect for the dignity of childhood.

**A3:** The future development of each individual child and of humanity as a whole depends on health-giving experiences in the first seven years of life. An atmosphere of loving warmth and guidance that promote joy, wonder, and reverence supports such healthy development.

**A4:** We recognize that free creative play, imitation, exploration of the social and natural world, practical and meaningful work, artistic activities, and nourishing sensory experiences are essential in the development of the young child. Through our programs and activities, we offer children a rhythmic experience of each day, week, and the seasons of the year.

**A5:** Our activities are based on the insights of Rudolf Steiner, and on the continuing research of Waldorf/Steiner educators, and other compatible pedagogical approaches.

**A6:** We strive for diversity in the racial, cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds of children coming to our schools. We strive to meet the unique developmental needs, capacities and cultural backgrounds of each child.

**A7:** We recognize that healthy child development takes place best in the context of a community based upon healthy social relationships among parents, teachers and children, and we strive to create such conscious, collaborative communities around our care for children.

### *B: Teacher Preparation and Professional Development*

**B1:** Our faculty and staff are qualified for their positions and responsibilities by education and/or experience. Teachers have a formal preparation, or the equivalent, for Waldorf/Steiner early childhood teaching, or are engaged in such preparation, and also meet state or provincial licensing requirements.

**B2:** Our faculty and staff are committed to ongoing self- and professional development as demonstrated by participation in conferences, courses, professional development workshops, etc.

**B3:** We support teacher development through regular mentoring, peer partnerships, review and evaluation.

**B4:** We recognize that developing artistic and practical abilities and capacities for observation and perception contribute to our ability to meet the needs of the children in our care. Our faculty and staff are actively engaged in deepening our understanding of Waldorf/Steiner indications for early childhood through collegial work, individual study, artistic activity and meditative practice.

**B5:** Our faculty and staff demonstrate professionalism and respect in their interactions with children, parents, colleagues and other professionals.

### ***C. Governance, Finances and Administration***

**C1:** Our program recognizes and complies with applicable legal and licensing requirements and meets health, fire, and safety standards.

**C2:** Our program is typically not-for-profit, as an expression of the free cultural life, and is not based on self-interest or personal gain.

(Note: The form most suited for such activity is usually that of an incorporated, not-for-profit organization. There may be exceptions to this in certain situations such as home programs, and this WECAN membership criterion may be waived through a decision of the WECAN Board or board designated committee.)

**C3:** We have clearly stated processes for making administrative decisions, future planning, and review and development of programs, administrative and financial policies.

**C4:** Our program has clearly defined employment, evaluation and review procedures for faculty and staff, including agreed upon compensation, terms of employment, and principal duties and responsibilities. Procedures for non-renewal or termination of employment are clearly delineated.

**C5:** Our program complies with all applicable laws regarding discrimination based on any and all protected categories, in all areas, including admissions, employment, and personnel.

**C6:** We have demonstrated our ability to generate sufficient resources to maintain our educational programs, facilities, and to support our faculty and staff. We strive to cultivate socially responsible practices in the setting of tuitions, tuition assistance, and salaries and benefits.

**C7:** Our organization engages in regular self-study / peer review process on an organizational, institutional basis, as well as with individual teachers.

**C8:** In our administrative and financial practices, we work collaboratively rather than hierarchically, in an effort to be socially responsible in our work with colleagues, parents, the institution and the wider community.

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### ***D. Relation with the Wider Movement:***

**D1:** We recognize ourselves as colleagues in a world movement on behalf of the young child. As such, we are committed to collaborating with our colleagues on local, regional, North American, and international levels as a fully established, healthy representative of Waldorf/Steiner early childhood education.

## **The Self-Study/Evaluation Process**

Schools that have completed the evaluation process invariably find that the principal benefit is the spirit of inquiry that develops in the school community as a whole concerning the school's qualities, needs, and plans for the future. Of all the components, it is the self-study conducted by the school itself which most contributes to this spirit of inquiry and to a commitment for school-improvement. The purpose of the material that follows is to help the school develop an evaluation plan and process that will most effectively stimulate and nurture such inquiry and commitment.

For purposes of simplicity, this section will describe a typical plan, representing a general schedule and set of procedures that have proven to be successful in previous evaluations conducted by schools. Schools are encouraged to make modifications that may streamline or improve the process in view of the school's own special circumstances or priorities. If there are any significant variations from the established procedure described herein, however, the school should consult with the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator.

AWSNA maintains the evaluation schedule for seven years. Schools that are due for re-evaluation are sent a reminder in the year preceding the beginning of the self-study cycle.

### ***Application for Accreditation***

To initiate the accreditation process, complete the Application using Appendix A. Mail it to the Accreditation Coordinator providing any and all of the materials requested. The Coordinator will examine it for completeness and consult with the Regional Representative to the Leadership Council and Accreditation Review Committee members if there is any question regarding readiness. The school will be contacted about its acceptance for the accreditation process and the Accreditation Coordinator will arrange an on-site visit to introduce the process to the community. Applications are due May 1 or November 1. If applying by May 1, the team visit will occur a year from the following February. If applying by November 1, the team visit will occur a year from the following October. The application should be accompanied by the \$200 application fee. The \$800 administrative fee is due at the time of the Accreditation Coordinator's visit.

A school that applies for accreditation or continuing accreditation needs to be a member in good standing with the Association that includes being current with dues payments.

The school must also plan its budget to provide funds for the cost of the evaluation visit. No honoraria are ever given to team members, even those from the public, governmental, or collegiate sectors. The principal expenses to be incurred will be travel, lodging, and meals for the visiting team. The school may experience some extra secretarial, copying, and materials costs. The costs will vary according to the manner in which the school decides to coordinate the self-study and team visit, the number of team members coming from out of the area, and the geographical differences in cost-of-living. Expenses for accreditation are usually spread over two budget years.

An application is good for two years. If the accreditation process has not become active after submitting the application within two years, a updated application accompanied by a \$200 fee is necessary. If a re-visit by the Accreditation Coordinator becomes necessary (because of time lapse or need to train a new In-House Coordinator), an honorarium of \$300 applies.

### ***Introductory Evaluation (Orientation) Visit***

After completing the application process, the school needs to make arrangements for an on-campus visit by the Accreditation Coordinator. The principal purpose is to ensure that the school community has a clear understanding of the purpose, process, and intended results of the self-study and the evaluation program as a whole. It can also serve to relieve potential

anxiety on the part of faculty and others and it may even help significantly in stimulating enthusiasm and excitement for the process.

The visit can be held on a regular day of school, if desired, or it can be part of an in-service day. The visit should be led by the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator or delegated to an appropriate person.

A typical introductory evaluation visit will have these components:

- A tour of the campus
- A general orientation meeting for the entire administration, faculty, and non-teaching staff in addition to representatives from the Board of Trustees and parents (30-45 minutes) to provide an overview of the entire evaluation process. The presentation will depend upon the previous experience of the school and the time of the year, but there should be discussion of the following: rationale for the evaluation/accreditation program, AWSNA Shared Principles, Disclosure and Congruence as two fundamental measures of school effectiveness, the seven-year cycle and its components, co-accreditation (if applicable) with another association, the self-study (desired outcome, organization, procedures, and areas to be studied), the visitation (selection of a team, functions of the team, general schedule and process, etc.), and other topics of interest to the school.
- (OPTIONAL) A separate meeting with the Board of Trustees, or a few representatives of the Board, particularly if none are able to attend the general orientation meeting. It is essential that there be some trustee involvement in the orientation to help the Board understand its vitally important role in the self-study and evaluation.
- A meeting with the self-study coordinator and/or steering committee (two hours) to discuss specific planning for the evaluation. This session includes discussion of the role of the coordinator and/or steering committee, establishing an overall schedule and timetable, the self-study instrument and materials, establishment of the necessary self-study committees, preparation of the self-study report, selection of the visiting team, mailings to visiting team members, etc.
- The Accreditation Coordinator sets the dates for the team visit in concert with the school coordinator and steering committee and the co-accrediting organization, when applicable.

Thus, if the visit is held on a school day, the Accreditation Coordinator can complete the responsibilities in a day, and the entire faculty needs to be involved only for the 30-45 minute general briefing. It works best if this general briefing is scheduled into the regular faculty meeting time. However the arrangements are made, it is vitally important that this introductory evaluation workshop is held soon after the school's application is received and accepted and that it be conducted by an experienced evaluator (preferably the Accreditation Coordinator).

The \$800 administrative fee is due at the time of this visit.

### ***Selection of a Self-Study Coordinator and Steering Committee***

As the school begins planning for the evaluation, the very first step is to select and appoint a person and small committee, from within the school to provide coordination and leadership for the self-study and evaluation. It is strongly recommended that the school administrator or coordinator not assume this responsibility himself or herself for two principal reasons:

1. Leadership and coordination of an effective self-study will require some intensive effort and time that may be incompatible with the ongoing administrative responsibilities.
2. The self-study may be more open, thorough, and open-ended if someone other than the school administration is directing it. The administration will be importantly involved in the self-study, particularly as findings and conclusions are developed.

Typically, the steering committee is composed of the coordinator, the administrator, and the faculty and college chairpeople. The coordinator and members of a steering committee, should be well organized, should write well, should have had previous evaluation experience (possibly as members of an evaluation visiting team), and should have sound rapport with the school community. The coordinator, or leader of the steering committee, should report to the school and clear all schedules, assignments, ordering of materials, etc. with the school. It is recommended that the steering committee meet weekly for a short time and that this meeting be built into the individuals' schedules.

If there is a change in the school coordinator of the accreditation process, notify the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator. A re-visit to the school to train the new person may be necessary. The school incurs expenses of this re-visit including a \$300 honorarium.

The following elements would appear in a typical job description for the faculty coordinator, or leader of the steering committee:

- Chairs and sets agendas for meetings of the steering committee.
- Sets general timetable and deadlines, with approval of the school.
- Orders evaluation materials and documents.
- Establishes a self-study structure and composition.
- Collects and coordinates review and editing of self-study reports.
- Assists the school with the logistics for evaluation visit: invitations to team members, mailings to team members, and specific arrangements for the visit.
- MOST IMPORTANT – The self-study coordinator keeps things moving, checks on progress of writing assignments frequently, helps to keep faculty from getting 'bogged down' in unnecessary detail, and keeps the school informed of progress and potential problems.

### ***Selection of a Visiting Team leader***

Within one year of the planned team visit, the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator selects a team leader in consultation with the school.

It is the responsibility of AWSNA to maintain a list of experienced AWSNA school faculty and administrators, who have been trained and served on previous evaluation teams, to fulfill the vitally important responsibilities of the visiting team leader. The visiting team leader (or co-chair, if a dual evaluation with another association is involved) must be someone on the approved AWSNA list.

The team leader can be a very useful resource for advice and consultation throughout the self-study and evaluation process. Once the team leader has been invited and has accepted the task, the visiting team leader makes a visit to tour the campus, to examine the progress of the self-study document, and to assist in the details for the visit.

### ***Selection of a Visiting Team***

AWSNA maintains a list of teachers and administrators who are qualified for service on visiting teams. Each AWSNA school is asked to recommend possible faculty and administrators from his/her school for such service and to update this list on an annual basis. AWSNA keeps track of the principal teaching and administrative expertise for each of the nominees as well as the previous experience in evaluation. These people are nominated for their objectivity, sensitivity, writing ability, and computer skills in addition to their specific experience in teaching or administration.

It is expected that a maximum of 80% of a visiting team will consist of people from the AWSNA lists with the other 20% consisting of people the school would like to include from local public

schools, colleges or universities, or state agencies. While AWSNA has the responsibility for nominating team members for its contingent, the school may veto such nominations and request replacements in the case of a conflict of interest or some other sound reason.

The size of the visiting team will vary with the size of the school and its range in grades and programs. Generally, six people comprise a team for a K-8 school and eight people serve on a team for a K-12 operation..

Once there is agreement on the list of team members and the team roster is composed and supplied to the school, the school sends a letter of acknowledgement (Appendix C). The Visiting Team Information Sheet (Appendix D) should be included in the mailing. This form should be sent by the host school and returned to the visiting team leader with a copy to the school.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE SELF-STUDY

### *Areas of the School That Must be Included in the Self-Study*

(Not necessarily organized as follows.) These clusters are organized in accord with the AWSNA Shared Principles, which should be addressed during the self-study process.

- A. Purpose, Goals, and Philosophy
- B. Educational Program, Activities and Student Services
  - Curriculum and Overall Program – to include academic study, artistic and practical activities, and physical education, and all extracurricular activities. This is, typically, the largest portion of the self-study; it should be organized vertically by subject and horizontally by grade level. Generally, library/media services and instruction are included here, although the library facility itself may be covered under buildings and grounds.
  - Student Services – counseling, guidance, health services, referral services, school and college placement, follow-up on graduates (if not under community of the school), etc.
  - Extracurricular Activities
  - Gender, Ethnic and Cultural Inclusion-Climate and Morale – curriculum and program components and materials that affect these areas.
  - Other required areas – if applicable and not already included – boarding and residential life, early childhood programs, religious programs, student exchanges, special education and instruction, special programs (such as summer sessions, before- and after-school programs, institutes, etc.), and volunteer/service programs.
- C. Governance, Administration, Finance and Law
  - Governance and Decision-making – to include all aspects of the school community, communications and relations between the board/administration/faculty as well as between the school and its various constituencies of parents, students, and friends.
  - Business and Financial Management
  - School Facilities – to include buildings, grounds, equipment, maintenance, transportation and safety provisions.
  - Development, Public Relations, Alumni Affairs, etc.
- D. Personnel
  - Administration, Faculty and Staff – to include organization, responsibilities, relationships, qualifications, and personnel practices.
- E. Community of the School
  - Admissions Policies and Procedures, Financial Aid
  - Student Body – statistics on enrollment, attrition, graduates, former students.
  - Gender and Ethnic/Cultural Inclusion – composition of board, administration, faculty, student body, and parents.



- School Climate and Morale – factors contributing to the learning and social environment.
- Parents Organization and Programs

Perhaps a note of caution about the use of questionnaires is appropriate. Appendix N provides a Parent Survey. If this survey is to be altered in any manner, please supply the Accreditation Coordinator with a sample of the survey to be administered. It is important that questionnaires be distributed to an entire group (parents, for example) with procedures for follow-up to guarantee a valid return. A situation to avoid is to mail a questionnaire to all parents and then to attempt to draw conclusions from the typically low proportion (30% or less) of returns.

It is recommended that the surveys be distributed to parents when they attend a class parent meeting and that time be allowed for completion. A small group of parents can very successfully manage the distribution, collection, and compilation of the results

## Schedule for Self-Study

Typically, the self-study portion of the evaluation should be commenced approximately a year and a half before the time of the actual team visit.

The self-study report by the school should be in final form and ready for mailing to the visiting team no later than five weeks prior to the visit. For schools on a fall visit schedule, most of the self-study report material needs to be generated and written in draft form prior to the end of the previous school year. This will leave ample time during the summer and early fall for updating, editing, and final revision. For schools planning their visitation during the winter, the self-study should be in draft form by the beginning of the school year. This will leave fall for updating, editing, and final revision.

While schools are expected to develop a time schedule that suits the school best, the following represents a typical schedule of activities, roughly in chronological order, for schools following the two most common timetables:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Fall Visit</b>	<b>Winter Visit</b>
Appoint in-house coordinator & steering committee	Spring (1) November 1 prior to introductory visit	Fall (1) May 1 prior to introductory visit
Submit application to AWSNA		
Introductory (orientation) workshop / visit by AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator	Winter / spring (1)	Fall (1)
Establish dates of Team visit	Winter / spring (1)	Fall (1)
Organization of Self-Study	Winter / spring (1)	Fall (1)
Begin Self-Study with Philosophy section	Spring (1)	Fall (1)
Continue self-study with Program section	Summer / Fall (1)	Winter / spring (1)
Selection of Visiting Team Leader	Winter / spring (1)	Winter / spring (1)
Selection of Visiting Team	Spring (2)	Spring (1)
Visit by Visiting Team Leader	Spring (2)	Fall (2)
Draft of Self Study Report completed	May (2)	October (2)
Updating, editing, revision of Report	Summer (2)	Fall (2)
Self-Study Report mailed to Team	September (2)	January (2)
Visit of Team	October (2)	February / March (2)
Team Recommendation to Accreditation Review Committee	November (2)	April (2)
Accreditation Review Committee meets	December	May
Affirmation by Delegates	Winter (2)	Summer (2)

## Process and Format

The school is required to cover the various aspects of the school as described previously. The self-study report should begin with the presentation and review of the school's Philosophy and Objectives. It is suggested that the school set a typical report format for the various writers and that it strives for consistency. Typically, self-study reports will include a section with a narrative description and analysis for the area, a summary of principal strengths, a summary of principal weaknesses, and, indications of any plans in progress to meet the weaknesses.

Careful organization of the school community is important for a good self-study. The school will want to assign all members of the faculty to one or more areas and, as appropriate, will want representation in certain areas from trustees, key parents, and older students. If possible, no faculty member should be assigned to more than two or three areas.

## **Assembling and Distributing the Self-Study Report**

A self-study report will be most helpful to the school and the visiting team if it is clearly organized, succinct, and as brief as possible. One very acceptable method of limiting the size of the self-study report is to separate the data and specific documentation, which were generated to develop findings, from the self-study report itself. In this case, the data and documentation for each part of the self-study report should be saved for the visiting team to use upon arrival at the school. Even separating specific data from the self-study report can result in a large report if the school is large or has several divisions. Responsibility for collecting, compiling, coordinating, editing, and revising section reports, and eventually, the entire self-study report is generally that of the self-study coordinator and/or the steering committee. The self-study report should be presented, or made available, to the faculty before the visiting team arrives.

The self-study document should be formatted in PDF or Microsoft Word to be consistent with the formats used by those who will receive it electronically.

The materials for the visiting team must include a set of individual staff data forms, one filled out by each member of the faculty and staff. The individual teacher staff data form used should include the present teaching schedule and responsibilities (for the year in which the visitation will occur), academic background and training, teaching and/or administrative experience, and other professional, in-service, or relevant non-school related experience. AWSNA supplies a form (Data for Individual Faculty Members, Appendix J), which may be copied for this purpose. These completed forms should not be mailed to the visiting team, but should be available for the team's use at the school.

## **Preparation for the Visit of the Evaluation Team**

It is recommended that the visiting team leader visit the school no later than three months prior to the actual evaluation visit, preferably earlier. This will provide an opportunity for the leader to talk with the coordinator, steering committee, and faculty about the forthcoming visit, to check on progress in completing the self-study, and to be sure that all arrangements for the visit have been made.

Certain tasks need to be accomplished by the host school. These include:

- Making arrangements for lodging and meals for the visiting team members and providing advice and/or assistance in making travel arrangements.
- Providing space at the school for the exclusive use of the visiting team during the visit, and providing equipment (such as computers), supplies, and evaluation information (such as self-study data not included in the report, schedules, etc.) for use of the committee. Arrangements for team travel between lodging and school must also be made.
- Sending information to team members sufficiently ahead of time as follows:
  - List of complete team, with addresses and telephone numbers
  - Travel and housing information
  - School catalogue, brochure, handbooks, etc.
  - Statement of school's mission and philosophy
  - Schedules and floor plan for the school
  - AWSNA Form – School Profile from the Appendix
  - Information for Accreditation Team Members from Appendix (to be sent by the Team Leader)
- Sending the self-study report or portions thereof, to the visiting team no later than five weeks prior to the visit.
- Seeing that the school operates on as normal a schedule as possible during the visit (discouraging field trips, examinations, special assemblies, etc.) and ensuring that school

personnel and representative groups (trustees, parents, student leaders, etc.) will be available to talk with the visiting team members before and after school during their visit.

## **The Accreditation Visit**

The principal purpose of the visiting team is to review, assess, and validate or modify the school's own findings as generated by the school's self-study process. Therefore, the visiting team will begin its work with the school's self-study report. A second purpose of the visiting team, however, may involve going beyond the self-study report itself; this is the responsibility to help the school learn what it may have missed during the self-study process. It may be that most schools, like most individuals, have a "blind" side consisting of qualities that are either taken for granted or are more easily observed and identified by someone outside the school community than people caught up in the everyday flow of activity at the school.

It is important that everyone understand a limitation, which is both philosophical and practical, of the evaluation visit. The AWSNA evaluation cannot, and does not, attempt to evaluate individual performance of anyone at the school. While the visiting team will visit individual classes, this is for the purpose of sensing the school's overall instructional methods and style, and not to evaluate individual teaching effectiveness. The reasons for this limitation are obvious from the limited time, three to four days at the most, spent on the campus. Thus, while the school's own process for evaluation of individual performance of administrators and teachers will be reviewed by the visiting team, the team's interest will be directed to the effectiveness of the evaluation process, and communicating of it to those involved, not the performance of individuals. Hopefully, this is a point that will be made amply clear to the entire faculty through initial briefings as well as the actual behavior of the team members. Another limitation of the team visit is that it cannot provide a "consultant's report" on each discipline; since it is the whole school that is being evaluated, all team members will be involved in the review of two or three different areas. There will be a team report for each area but it must be limited to principal impressions only.

The actual schedule for the evaluation visit will vary with the school and its program, but it will typically span a four-day period as follows:

### ***First Day - Arrival and Orientation of the Visiting Team***

12:00 p.m.	Arrival of team, check-in at place of lodging
2:00 p.m.	Preliminary meeting of the visiting team
3:00-4:30 p.m.	Tour of the campus
4:30 p.m.	Informal social hour for school community including administration, faculty, board, parents, and visiting team
5:30 p.m.	Supper for visiting team, school leaders, and in-house accreditation coordinators
7:00-10:00 p.m.	Organization, orientation, and planning meeting of the visiting team

### ***Second & Third Days - Visits and Meetings***

7:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00-12:00 Noon	Visits to classes, talks with faculty, etc.
12:00 Noon	Lunch at school, informal talks with faculty and students
1:00 P.M.	Visits to classes, activities, athletics, etc.
3:30 p.m.	Meetings with special groups such as trustees, parent leaders, alumni representatives, faculty committees, departments, etc.
5:30 p.m.	Supper (for visiting team alone)
7:00 p.m.	Evening meeting of visiting team as a whole - discussion, examination of exhibits, preparation of reports, visiting team review of reports

**Final Day - Reporting**

7:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00 a.m.	Final visits, or re-visits, with emphasis on areas with questions or those not covered earlier
1 1:00 a.m.	Meeting of visiting team - final review of subcommittee reports, agreement on major findings and recommendation on accreditation
12:00 Noon	Lunch
2:00 p.m.	Exit interview with the school representative(s) and visiting team leader and assistant chair, sharing of major findings
3:30 p.m.	Oral exit report of major findings to faculty, administration, and trustees, by the visiting team leader and team members

It is essential that the visiting team have as much time as possible for visiting classes, meeting with faculty (and students), reviewing materials, and writing their reports during these four days. For this reason, it is inappropriate for the host school to attempt to entertain the visiting team except for the one informal gathering of administration, faculty, trustees, parents, and team on the day of arrival. This social occasion can be an afternoon tea or reception followed by a dinner for the team and school community leaders. At the reception, the team leader will make a few remarks and introduce the team. At the dinner, there should be a presentation of the school's philosophy and remarks of welcome from a school representative. Any such formal presentation, however, should be very brief and principal emphasis should be on informal conversation between community leaders and team.

The coordinator and/or steering committee from the school has an important final role during the visitation, involving such functions as:

- Serving as liaison to the visiting team, ensuring that the team has the equipment, materials, and information it needs.
- Seeing that team members are reimbursed for their expenses in a timely fashion.
- Providing any needed special schedules or interviewing time with faculty, administration, part-time personnel, representative trustees, parents, or students, etc.
- Providing computers and/or secretarial assistance as the team prepares its reports
- Daily checking, as necessary, on lodgings, meals, refreshments, transportation, etc.

The visiting team should wear nametags during the visit and it may be good for the school faculty members to wear nametags too.

No member of the visiting team should leave the campus until a draft of the report(s) for which the team member is responsible has been left with the team leader. The team leader will review the drafts, do sufficient editing to ensure clarity, coherence, and consistency, and, when possible, mail a copy of the final draft, or appropriate sections of it, to team members for any final revisions. As a courtesy, this draft should also be sent to the school, who may make suggestions, but only if they involve clear errors or omissions. The final responsibility for the format and content of the visiting team report is that of the team leader. The team leader completes the duties by sending two final copies of the visiting team report to the school and one hard copy and one electronic copy to the Accreditation Coordinator. The school and the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator should receive the final report no later than four weeks after the conclusion of the visit.

If it becomes necessary for a school to postpone or cancel a team visit after the team members are appointed, there will be a \$200 fee for the additional administrative activity involved in cancelling and reforming the team.

## **Co-Accreditation with Other Organizations**

Some schools will seek dual accreditation by AWSNA and another organization. In such cases, schools are encouraged to do a combined self-study and evaluation that will meet the requirements of both organizations. These schools should be sure to contact the director of evaluation for the other organization at the beginning of the planning process and to notify AWSNA of its intention to accomplish a dual accreditation in writing. It is particularly important that the designated visiting team leader and the self-study instrument are approved by both organizations. It is preferred that the *AWSNA Guide for School Self-Study* be used. The major differences will be in the AWSNA Shared Principles. **See *Handbook for Visiting Team and Appendix X*.**

## The Accreditation Process

Accreditation is granted by AWSNA when it is assured that the school has demonstrated, through successful completion of a self-study and evaluation visit, that it meets the AWSNA *Shared Principles*, that it fairly and accurately discloses its mission and program, and that it is achieving a high degree of congruence between its stated mission and the program it provides. The following is a brief description of the procedures and groups involved in this determination.

## Report and Recommendation of the Visiting Team

At the conclusion of the evaluation visit, the visiting team determines whether or not it will recommend to AWSNA that the school completing its evaluation should be granted full accreditation (or approved for continuing accreditation). **This recommendation is not shared with the school in the final meeting of the school and the visiting team leader and is sent in a separate letter to the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator.** The Visiting Team's recommendation is not an official action of AWSNA unless it is later approved by the Accreditation Review Committee and affirmed at a semi-annual Delegates' Meeting. On occasion, the visiting team's recommendation is altered by the Accreditation Review Committee.

If the visiting team should decide not to recommend accreditation, this must be for specific reasons; such reasons would have to involve demonstrable deviation from the AWSNA *Shared Principles*, demonstrable inadequacy of disclosure of mission or program, significant inconsistency between the stated mission of the school and the program as observed by the visiting team, or lack of analysis in the self-study.

The recommendation of the visiting team can be in one of the following forms and should be decided by a process of consensus:

- Unanimous recommendation for accreditation.
- Recommendation for accreditation with specific conditions for follow-up and remediation of problems by the school, perhaps in a specific time frame.
- Recommendation that the school not be approved for accreditation with specific reasons for this recommendation.

It is expected that the visiting team will report as a group, and every attempt should be made by the chair and the team to achieve consensus.

## Accreditation Review Committee

The Accreditation Review Committee is a standing committee appointed by AWSNA and consists of qualified, experienced Waldorf teachers and administrators. The ARC is responsible for reviewing all school and team reports pertinent to accreditation. As such, the ARC is responsible for formulating a recommendation for the Delegates Meeting regarding the accreditation status of an individual school. The ARC may make one of four decisions regarding accreditation status:

- Full accreditation (with term length specified)
- Conditional accreditation (with specific conditions and the schedule for meeting them)
- Postponement (pending completion by the school of specific expectations of the ARC)
- No accreditation

Once the ARC has made a decision regarding accreditation status, the Accreditation Coordinator will inform the regional Leadership Council member of that decision, and the procedure described immediately below will be followed.

The AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator is the official representative of the Accreditation Review Committee and, as such, is responsible for all communications with the schools, the Leadership Council, and/or the AWSNA Executive Team, either directly or through representatives mandated by the Accreditation Coordinator. The Chair of the Accreditation Review Committee answers to the Executive Team of AWSNA.

It is the further responsibility of the Accreditation Review Committee to review evaluation/accreditation program procedures periodically and, more specifically, to review all evaluation reports (Visiting Team, Response/Action Plan, and Progress Reports) on behalf of AWSNA. The Accreditation Review Committee may accept or modify the recommendation for accreditation submitted by the visiting team, and reports this to the Accreditation Coordinator. In the case of an adverse recommendation for accreditation, the school will be notified, and will be given an opportunity to appeal if it chooses, before final action. The Accreditation Review Committee may also attach certain conditions along with a recommendation for accreditation if the Committee feels that circumstances justify such conditions. Such conditions are part of the recommendation to be considered.

### **Action by the Accreditation Review Committee and the Delegates**

Final responsibility for granting, delaying, or denying accreditation rests with the body of delegates. It hears the report and recommendation submitted by the Chair of the Accreditation Review Committee, and affirms it. Most action will occur at one of the regular semi-annual meetings of the delegates. The action of the delegates is communicated to the school by the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator who will also advise the school on required follow-up and remediation of any conditions involved.

### **Annual Report**

Each year an Annual Report is to be filed which includes any substantive changes in the school. If, after one reminder, the report is not received within 30 days, the designation on the website listing for the school will be changed to “non-compliant” status.

### **Response Report/Action Plan**

Within the year after the AWSNA visit, the AWSNA visiting team report is reviewed by the administration, faculty, and trustees of the school, and the school develops a plan for school improvement, building upon what it has gleaned from its constituent survey, self-study, visiting team report (especially the major recommendations). The plan for school improvement can take the form of a strategic plan – either a new or updated one – or the form of a stand-alone document, one that projects out three-to-five years. The school attaches to its Plan for School Improvement/Strategic Plan Update a cover letter indicating any major changes and a response report checklist, checking off agreement with recommendations or writing a rationale for disagreement with any major recommendation(s). These response reports are due to the ARC by October 15 for fall visits and by March 15 for winter visits. The cover letter, Plan for School Improvement/Strategic Plan Update, and Response Report are reviewed by the Accreditation Review Committee; any action is communicated to the school.

### **Progress Report**

At the end of the third year following the evaluation visit, the school submits a Progress Report. In this, the school describes progress made in implementing all recommendations.

The Progress Report Form is included in Appendix Z. The Progress Report, like earlier evaluation reports, is reviewed by the Accreditation Review Committee who then recommends appropriate action for approval of the report by the Accreditation Review Committee. In most instances, this completes the school’s responsibility for reporting to AWSNA for this evaluation cycle, but AWSNA may require a supplementary, or later report, or other form of follow-up, if serious concerns remain about the school or demonstrable lack of attention to opportunities for



self-improvement is apparent. The action by AWSNA on the Progress Report and required follow-up or remediation, if any, is reported promptly to the school.

The purpose of the follow-up reports is to encourage and assist the school to take maximum advantage of the opportunity provided by the evaluation/accreditation program to grow and improve. The purpose is not to look for deficiencies or to require schools to undertake activity that will not contribute to the school's own search for excellence and growth. On the other hand, the evaluation program and the follow-up after the visitation enable the school to certify its accountability to the best interests of its students and to the school community as a whole. In its evaluation/accreditation program AWSNA continually strives for the appropriate balance between supporting school development and refraining from interference in the internal affairs of any member school.

## **Appeals Procedures**

In almost all cases, member schools have found the evaluation/accreditation program to be positive, supportive, encouraging, and even exciting. One reason for this is that most AWSNA member schools are strong schools with strong personnel and resources. Another is that AWSNA schools, by their very purpose, are committed to quality, improvement, and growth; their structure, which depends upon voluntary enrollment (and often substantial, voluntary financial support), mandates a high level of accountability to the school community. Thus, while one result of a school's evaluation is that it will have some specific challenges to meet and some specific work on self-improvement to do, it is rare that a school's evaluation will lead to an adverse accreditation action.

If an adverse accreditation action, however, is recommended by the Accreditation Review Committee, a member school is accorded the right to appear before the Accreditation Review Committee to contest this recommendation.

The procedures to be followed are:

- The school is notified in writing of the proposed recommendation for adverse accrediting action, and the reasons for the recommendation after the meeting of the Accreditation Review Committee at which the school's status was considered.
- The school may request to have its representative(s) appear before the Accreditation Review Committee to lodge an appeal or to submit additional information. Such a request must be submitted in writing to the Accreditation Coordinator no later than four weeks prior to the next meeting of the Committee following the ARC's decision.
- A school desiring to contest the Accreditation Review Committee's decision after and beyond its meeting with the Accreditation Review Committee may request to have its representative(s) appear before the Leadership Council when its status is to be considered. The intention of the school to make this appeal must be submitted in writing to the AWSNA Accreditation Office no later than two weeks before the meeting of the council.

The action of the Leadership Council on accreditation appeals, after such appeals have been heard, is final.

## **Postponement/Extension**

A school needing postponement or an extension of the accreditation process should write a formal letter on school letterhead the Accreditation Coordinator and describe the reasons needed.

In the event of a school needing to postpone the process, the formal written request should happen within two months of receiving a Accreditation Renewal Notice. Schools needing an extension of the accreditation process while in process should write a formal request, stating the proposed timeline within which the school expects to be able to complete the process. This request must be sent prior to April 1 for a school scheduled for a site visit the falling fall, and no

later than August 1 for site visit the following winter/spring. This schedule permits sufficient time for Accreditation Review Committee consideration of the request.

Requests submitted after the above dates will result in a \$200 change fee.

Requests for postponements or extensions for Candidate schools that extend the period of Candidacy past the three year Candidacy time period described in the AWSNA Path To Membership will be reviewed and decided upon by the Leadership Council. In such cases the school should make a formal request to the Leadership Council stating the “extraordinary reasons” for their request.

## Summary Schedule of the AWSNA Evaluation/Accreditation Cycle

### *Year Prior to Evaluation Visit (Year 6 or 9)*

<u>Fall Visit</u>	<u>Winter Visit</u>	
Winter	Fall	School appoints school leadership for self-study (Coordinator and/or steering committee) and applies for accreditation or re-accreditation. AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator visits.
Winter	Fall	Establishment of dates for evaluation visit. Organization and commencement of self-study, at least eighteen months before evaluation visit.
Fall/ Winter	Winter/Spring	Self-study underway (see more detailed schedule on page 13).

### *Year of Evaluation Visit (Year 7 or 10)*

Winter	Fall	AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator, in consultation with school, selects and invites a visiting team leader.
Winter/Spring	Spring/Summer	Selection of visiting team.
Spring	Fall	Contact with school by visiting team leader to check on progress of evaluation, to coordinate mailings to visiting team, and to make arrangements for the visit.

### *Five weeks prior to team visit:*

Final check on logistics for the evaluation visit by leader and final mailing to visiting team of the self-study.

### *Week of team visit:*

Evaluation visit (span of four days): Sunday afternoon to Wednesday afternoon.

### *Four weeks after visit*

School receives written report from visiting team leader.

### *Remaining activity during term of visit*

November	April	Accreditation Review Committee receives and reviews visiting team report.
December	May	ARC meets to review Self-Study and Team Report and decide accreditation status.
January	June	Accreditation Review Committee recommends accreditation status to delegates from schools. Delegates affirm status.

### *Year after Evaluation Visit (Year 1)*

Winter Visit March 15	Fall Visit October 15	School submits its Response Report/ Action Plan to the ARC based on the major recommendations of the visiting team, the constituent survey, and the self-study.
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### *Third Year after Evaluation Visit (Year 3)*

Winter Visit March 15	Fall Visit October 15	School submits Progress Report to ARC, addressing all recommendations.
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### *Fifth Year after Evaluation Visit (Year 5)*

School commences review of its Philosophy and Goals as initial preparation for the next self-study.

## Variance in 10 Year Cycle

*If school has requested a variance in cycle of 10 years, the following applies:*

### *Fourth Year after Evaluation Visit (Year 4)*

The school makes current its School Improvement Plan as expressed in the One Year Response Report and the Three Year Progress Report and sends it to AWSNA.

### *Fifth Year after Evaluation Visit (Year 5)*

<b>October</b>	<b>March</b>	The school is revisited for 1 day by an AWSNA representative preferably the original team leader and one other team member. The revisit team conducts an on-site assessment and presents a 2-5-page report on the progress of the school in meeting the goals outlined in the original visiting team report.
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### *Sixth and Seventh Year after Evaluation Visit (Year 6 & 7)*

<b>October</b>	<b>March</b>	Unless follow-up is required by AWSNA to meet stipulations set by review of the revisit report, no additional reports are required in this year of the cycle.
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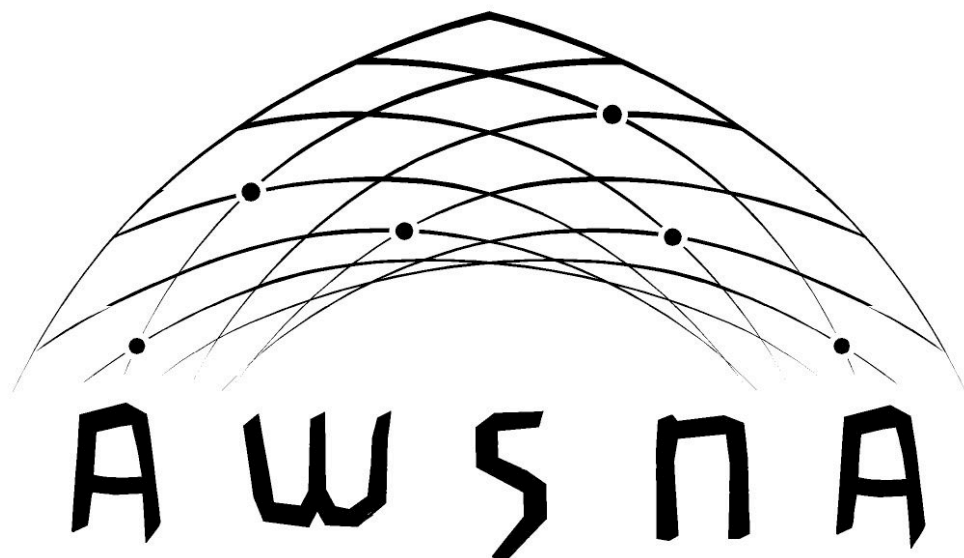
### *Eighth Year after Visit (Year 8)*

School commences preparations for self-study.

The ten-year cycle is available only to those schools that hold accreditation from another agency that follows a ten-year plan, and the school seeks dual accreditation with AWSNA and the other organization.



# Part II: Guide For School Self-Study



**December 2010 Version**

**Association of Waldorf Schools of North America**

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## Part II: Guide For School Self-Study

### Forward

The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) evolved out of meetings of the Waldorf schools and teacher training centers in the decade between 1960-1970. It became a legal, tax-exempt association under its present name in 1979 and was incorporated in the state of Massachusetts in 1990. AWSNA exists to support and encourage the work of all Waldorf schools in North America. Toward these ends, in June 1996, the delegates from the full member schools agreed to formulate an evaluation/ accreditation process for Waldorf schools in North America. The purpose of this process is to create conditions where quality Waldorf education can flourish. To that end, AWSNA assists schools in developing and maintaining Shared Principles based on the pedagogical indications of Rudolf Steiner. AWSNA achieves this by maintaining and systematically reviewing a set of Shared Principles and by conducting a full-scale evaluation/ accreditation program for each member school every seven years.

The seven-year cycle includes the following components:

- Year 1: the review by the school of its statement of philosophy and its curriculum guide
- Year 2: an intensive year of self-study via this evaluation instrument.
- Year 3: an AWSNA visiting team on-site evaluation and subsequent recommendation to AWSNA on accreditation
- Year 4: a Response Report/ Action Plan accounts for the school's plan to act on the major recommendations for school improvement
- Year 5: no additional reporting in this year, unless a follow-up is required by the AWSNA Accreditation Review Committee
- Year 6: a three-year Progress Report (three years after the AWSNA visit) outlining the steps the school has taken to meet the AWSNA recommendations for school improvement
- Year 7: no additional reporting in this year, unless a follow-up is required by AWSNA

Although it may occur that schools presently evaluated by regional, state, or provincial accrediting bodies find a need to continue to choose that organization's evaluation instrument, this guide has been developed to be particularly useful and appropriate for Waldorf schools and is the only accepted guide for AWSNA accreditation. The AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator, when asked, will introduce this guide to other accreditation bodies with the aim of the organization accepting it for a simultaneous proceeding through the evaluation/ accrediting process by AWSNA and the other association. At times, Guides from two organizations are blended in order to satisfy the requirements of both.

# Self-Study Report

## I. Purpose, Goals, and Philosophy

### *Overview Focus*

In narrative form, the Self-Study Committee on School Philosophy provides in its signed report an overview of the history of the school and its mission, including the following information:

- A description of the school: location, type, size, program, and corporate identity.
- A brief history of the school.
- The school's statement of philosophy, purposes and objectives with an indication of where the statement is published, how and when it was last reviewed, by whom it is officially endorsed, and the provision for its dissemination among the school's constituencies.

### *Related Questions to Address*

(Rather than answering the questions in a series, AWSNA asks self-study committees to utilize the questions as discussion launching points from which observations and analyses emerge).

Does the school have a statement of philosophy (and/or mission statement) that reflects its being based on principles of Waldorf education, the individual character of the school, sound educational tenets, and characteristics and needs of its students? Is it clearly stated? Is the philosophy implemented by specific statements of goals and/or objectives, and manifested in the educational program? Is the total school program in compliance with the statement of philosophy (AWSNA'S congruence principle)? What procedures were followed in the development (revision) and adoption of the statement? What persons or groups were involved? Is there provision for periodic review? Does the statement reflect the unique character of the school? What use is made of the statement? How is the philosophy statement disseminated to the entire school family?

### *Self-Study Conclusions*

The School Philosophy section presents its evaluation of the school's statement of philosophy and objectives and indicates the conclusions it has drawn from its study, indicating strengths, weaknesses or challenges, and any plans and priorities for the future.

### *Addenda*

Make available at the time of the visit a photocopy of the statement of philosophy and objectives, with evidence of the most recent endorsement.

### *Visiting Committee Report Charge*

The Visiting Team makes its independent assessment on the degree to which the AWSNA *Shared Principles* are being met and the congruence between the school's stated mission and its practices. The Visiting Team issues its observations, commendations, and recommendations in its report to AWSNA and to the school.

### *Relevant AWSNA Shared Principles*

**A1:** The school is an independent institution working out of the pedagogical indications of Rudolf Steiner, based on anthroposophy, the philosophy initiated by Rudolf Steiner.

**A2:** There is a clearly articulated statement of educational mission, philosophy, and goals that reflects the individual character of the school, based upon sound Waldorf educational tenets.

**A3:** There is FULL DISCLOSURE of the school's mission, policies, programs and practices.

**A4:** There is CONGRUENCE between the stated mission of the school and the actual program and practices of the school.

**A5:** The statement of educational mission, philosophy, and goals is approved by the school; it shall be understood and supported by the school community.

**A6:** The development and periodic review of the mission and vision of the school are a collective effort involving faculty, administrators, parents, board, and, if appropriate, students.

**A7:** The school teaches in an age-appropriate manner that rejects all forms of indoctrination of its students and lays the foundations for the capacities of creative and independent thinking.

**A8:** The school demonstrates its commitment to inclusiveness through its governance and leadership, curriculum, support programs, staffing, activities, and admissions policies.

## II. Educational Program, Activities, and Student Services

### *Overview Focus*

In narrative form, the school presents in its report an overview of the school program, which means the total developmental and learning experiences provided by the school. Since a school's program is its vital center, so too the school's self-study should center on program, with more investment in personnel, time, and analysis on this than on any other part of the self-study. Typically, the report includes the several areas assigned to specific elements of the school's program: e.g., Lower School Program, Language Arts Program, Athletics, Extracurricular Activities Program, Extended Care Program (schools with elementary programs), Residential Life Program (boarding schools), etc.

Both of the following approaches are required for gathering data and assessing the program:

1. Analysis by school levels: study divisions of the school : pre-school/lower/middle/upper school. This method should include a description of the content of each grade level that the school offers.
2. Analysis by disciplines of study: English, math, social studies, natural science, foreign language, visual arts, music, movement, physical education, etc.

In addition, the school should include in its description and self-evaluation the following areas:

- Student Services: Library / Remedial / Computer / Guidance / Testing / Activities
- Specialty Areas: Extended Day, Summer Programs, Residential Life, ESL, Remedial Programs, etc.

Gather information, data, and impressions in order to present in narrative form an analysis of the elements of the program, with overview, identification of strengths, challenges/weaknesses, and any plans and priorities for the future.

The report should include in its narrative overview commentary on (but not restricted to) the following areas:

- Relationship of the overall program to the school's stated mission and its success in contributing to and advancing the mission.
- Relationship of the major elements of the program (academic, arts, athletics, extracurricular, etc.) to one another and to the support of and advancement of the school mission.
- Organizational pattern and curriculum design of the school (departmental, self-contained classroom, schedule and calendar, etc.)
- Curriculum and program development (noting the faculty's role therein) and the responsiveness to the needs of the students and to the educational issues of the day (e.g., provisions for those with differing learning needs and styles, interdisciplinary study, multicultural issues, role of technology, etc.)

### *Related Questions to Address*

(Rather than answering the questions in a series, AWSNA asks self-study committees to use the questions as discussion launching points from which observations and analysis emerge,)

Overall Curriculum: Does the curriculum demonstrate adequate depth and breadth? Is there continuity? Interdisciplinary integration? Reasonable balance among disciplines, and among standard components of learning? Provision for development of study skills? Achievement and assessment? How is curricular change initiated and carried out? How is effectiveness assessed (curriculum evaluation)? Is the curriculum consistent with school philosophy? Does

the curriculum as a whole help the school to achieve its educational goals and objectives? Are athletics and the arts conceived as part of the curriculum?

Academic Areas: Is there a clear sense of scope and sequence to the curriculum? Departmental organization and meetings? Provision for exceptional students? Varied methodologies of instruction and variety in presentation? High degree of student participation and positive student attitudes? Attractive classroom appearance and atmosphere? Evidence of student interest and achievement?

Library /Media Center: Is each academic area and school level adequately represented in the library collections? Most importantly—is the quantity, quality, and diversity of the collection adequate to meet school needs? Is the instructional program in library usage and skills appropriate and sufficient for the school? Has the library incorporated the new technologies into its system?

Student Activities: Are the student activities programs related to the school's philosophy, and do they aid in realizing the educational and social purposes of the school? Are they integrated into the total school program? Is there adequate number of activities, variety, an appropriate degree of student involvement, and sufficient funding, supervision, effectiveness?

Student Services & Auxiliary Programs: What is the perceived quality of the food service (if, none, assess lunch plan), transportation service, and health service? Are auxiliary programs or services (such as extended day programs, campus stores, student exchanges, summer school programs, independent study programs, residential life for boarding schools) compatible with the overall philosophy and program of the school? What support is offered to meet students' individual needs, e.g. remedial therapy, etc.? What services are provided in the four counseling areas: personal, academic, secondary school/college, and vocational counseling? What procedures are in place for student orientation, advising, recognition, discipline, and reporting to parents? Is the counseling/advising program adequate for meeting student needs?

Describe the school's position on testing as an assessment. What assessment means are used? What, if any, standardized tests are administered and when? Provide any data available from standardized tests and sample student reports for each level.

### ***Addenda***

Attach at the end of the self-study (in the addenda section) copy of the school's academic profile, graduation or matriculation requirements, the daily schedule, and the yearly calendar. Make available at the time of the Visiting Team visit sample student reports and permanent records, the curriculum guide and syllabus for each grade and subject offered as well as any school handbooks that present the rules and regulations of the school for matters of discipline, and the like.

### ***Visiting Committee Report Charge***

The Visiting Committee makes its independent assessment on the degree to which the AWSNA Shared Principles are being met and the congruence between the school's stated mission and its practices. The Visiting Committee issues its observations, commendations, and recommendations in its report to AWSNA and to the school.

### ***Relevant AWSNA Shared Principles***

**B1:** The faculty is responsible for the educational program of the school and strives continually to recreate and renew the Waldorf curriculum according to the indications of Rudolf Steiner. An understanding of these indications will be developed through the collegial workings of the full faculty and each individual faculty member.

**B2:** A central understanding is that the education meets the needs of the developing child according to the insights of Rudolf Steiner, the continuing work of Waldorf educators, and contemporary insights that are considered compatible and appropriate.

**B3:** The school promotes student development in thinking (cognitive), feeling (affective), and willing (psychomotor) in an age appropriate manner by addressing the emerging individuality of the whole human being in both the process and the content of the curriculum.

**B4:** The educational program includes sufficient diversity and recognition of resources to meet the capacities, learning styles, developmental needs, and cultural backgrounds of the students enrolled.

**B5:** The school's program includes a balance of language, math, natural science, social science, humanities, fine arts, practical arts, physical education and practical work experience as is appropriate for the age, needs, and abilities of students.

**B6:** The faculty is responsible for ensuring review, evaluation, and development of the curriculum on a regular basis.

**B7:** The faculty provides regular oral and written assessment of progress for each student at all age levels and shares these assessments with the family in an open and timely manner. The school is able to document appropriate information regarding student performance in its student records.

**B8:** The school provides adequate access to program support. This may include guidance services, special needs support, and health services.

**B9:** The educational program addresses the rhythmic element within each lesson, the day, the week, the month, and the year.

**B10:** The length of the school day and year is sufficient for the total school program and will meet all applicable legal requirements.

**B11:** The school maintains records for students containing information required by law and as necessary for the operation of a quality program.

**B12:** The school provides or has access to appropriate and sufficient instructional materials and equipment necessary for the requirements of their instructional program and the needs of the students.

**B13:** The school demonstrates that it provides sufficient access to quality library and/or media center facilities, or suitable alternatives, as indicated by accepted Waldorf practices.

**B14:** If there is a residential program, it must be so conceived and staffed to fulfill that aspect of the school's program, particularly with respect to the portion of the day outside regular classroom hours. Applicable health and safety regulations shall be fully observed.

**B15:** The relationship between the school and any special programs it offers on a supplementary basis (summer sessions, student exchange, extra curricular, work experience, before- and after-school programs, special needs education, seminars, institutes, etc.) is fully disclosed. The operation of such supplemental programs shall not be in conflict with the school's purpose.

**E3:** The school only enrolls students whose needs the faculty believes it can meet through the school's programs, services, and activities.

**E7:** The school demonstrates that it provides adequate and competent supervision of all its students.

**E8:** Sufficient and appropriate disciplinary policies and procedures are implemented to provide for a safe and positive learning environment.

### III. Governance, Administration, Finance, and Law

#### *Overview Focus*

In narrative form, the school provides in its signed report an overview of the school's governance, administration, and decision-making process. Typically, schools assign self-study work in this area to appropriate individuals and committees. The school gathers information, data, and impressions in order to present in narrative form an analysis of its element of the school community (in the typical format of overview, identification of strengths, weaknesses or challenges, and any plans and priorities for the future findings). In the Self-Study on Governance & Administration report, the following issues should be addressed:

- A description of the school's governance. Include board of trustees, college of teachers, faculty, administrative staff, their operations and relationships.
- A description of board policies including: trustee selection, responsibilities, board/administrator relationship, orientation, committee structure, and trustee evaluation; a description of board/school policies that serve to place the school in compliance with federal mandates: e.g., in the United States, the Family Leave Act, Blood-borne Pathogens (A.I.D.S. policy), EPA directives (asbestos, lead, radon); Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), etc., and corresponding mandates in Canada and Mexico. (One or more trustees should contribute to this narrative.)
- A description of the College of Teachers or the body in the school that carries the ultimate responsibility for the pedagogy. Include a delineation of responsibilities and the group's relationship to the board and the faculty. (One or more college members should contribute to this report.)
- A description of the functioning of the faculty as a body which includes its relationships to the board, the college, and the parent organization.
- A description of the administrative structure of the school and administrative operating procedures.
- A description of the decision-making process and its implementation in school operations providing an example of a recent major decision indicating the involvement, where appropriate, of faculty, students, parents, and alumni/ae in the decision-making process.
- A description of the school's long-range (strategic) planning process.
- A description of the financial resources, the financial planning, and monitoring procedures to sustain the program of the school.
- A description of systems for maintaining and improving the physical plant: official inspections, insurance, housekeeping and maintenance programs, plans for capital replacements and renewals, energy conservation, crisis management protocols, evacuation procedures, etc.,
- A description of policies and practices for the recruitment, development, and evaluation of the support staff of the school.

#### *Related Questions to Address*

(Rather than answering the questions in a series, use the questions as discussion launching points from which observations and analysis emerge.)

School Governance and the Decision-Making Process: What is the organizational structure of the school, and how does it operate? In what areas does the school's board establish school policy? What areas of responsibility lie with the faculty? The College of Teachers? Are school policies and procedures written and disseminated? How are policy and procedural decisions reached? How is change initiated and effected? Is there a clear process for decision-making that is understood by the school community? To what extent is the total school community involved in the decision-making process? Is there provision for periodic evaluation of the board, the school, faculty, the College of Teachers, and the administrative staff?



**Business Management and Financial Affairs:** Is there an independent, annual financial report done by an external accounting firm? Is the school fiscally responsible? Is it stable, efficient, and effective in its financial operations? Is there adequate provision for insurance coverage, bonding, security, etc.? Does the school have sufficient resources to provide and maintain facilities, plant, and personnel adequate to support the program of the school?

**School Plant and Facilities:** Do the school plant and facilities adequately accommodate the school program? Is the school in compliance with all health and safety codes, playground inspections, building security concerns, etc.)? Is the plant adequately maintained with appropriate maintenance and housekeeping care? Are fire and other emergency drills held regularly? Is respect for property evident? Are any unsafe conditions in evidence (especially in laboratories, art rooms, shops, swimming pools, physical education and playground areas, and parking\bus areas),

### ***Self-Study Conclusions***

The Self-Study report on Governance & Administration presents its evaluation of the school's governance, administration, and decision-making and indicates the conclusions it has drawn from its study, indicating strengths, weaknesses or challenges, and any plans and priorities for the future.

### ***Addenda***

Attach a compiled summary of the last three years' (including the current year, if available) school statistics, as submitted to AWSNA: Budget Income & Expenses; Endowment, etc. (The school may photocopy each section from the submitted AWSNA Economic Survey forms and cut/paste as necessary.) Also send with the self-study, the current operating budget and latest financial report.

Make available to the Visiting Team during the visit a copy of agendas of recent board, college and faculty meetings and a copy of the school's IRS 501(c)(3) letter in the U.S. and the equivalent document showing non-profit status and tax-exemption in Canada or Mexico.

Also, make available to the Visiting Team upon its arrival to the school 1) a copy of the by-laws of the school and 2) a list of trustees, designating officers. In addition, make available the 3) independent financial report for the preceding year, 4) documentation that facilities and personnel conform to local, provincial and state public safety and health regulations, and 5) any board/school policies for government mandated matters (family leave, accommodations for disabled, blood-borne pathogens, requirements for asbestos and lead, etc.)

### ***Visiting Committee Report Charge***

The Visiting Team makes its independent assessment on the degree to which the AWSNA Shared Principles are being met and the congruence between the school's stated mission and its practices. The Visiting Team issues its observations, commendations, and recommendations in its report to AWSNA and to the school.

### ***Relevant AWSNA Shared Principles***

**C1:** The school is incorporated as a not-for-profit organization and shall have been granted 501(C)(3) status by the Internal Revenue Service in the United States, or the equivalent not-for-profit incorporation and tax-exempt status in Canada or Mexico.

**C2:** The school's governance structure is organized with sufficient independence from other organizations so as to ensure its ability to fulfill its mission and to control its own destiny.

**C3:** In developing its governance and administrative structures, the school takes into account relevant indications by Rudolf Steiner.

**C4:** The school is developed and organized so as to carry out policies effectively. It is responsible for school programs, personnel, facilities, and resources, to include the employment of all teachers, staff and support personnel.

**C5:** The school provides clearly stated decision-making processes for strategic planning, for the periodic review of school organization, and for appropriate development of programs and services.

**C6:** The school has clearly defined programs for regular evaluation of the performance of the administration, teachers and staff, and understood procedures for non-renewal and termination of employment.

**C7:** The school is in compliance with all applicable laws regarding discrimination based on any and all protected categories, in all areas, including admissions and employment.

**C8:** The school maintains its facilities and equipment that are aesthetic and meet health, fire, safety, and sanitary standards.

**C9:** The school generates necessary resources for providing and maintaining physical facilities, equipment and materials adequate to support the programs of the school.

**C10:** The school has appropriate procedures for management of financial resources including process for annual budget-making, accounting, auditing such accounts, investing, and long-range planning.

**C11:** The school provides adequate fundraising, public relations, and financial management support to achieve the school's mission

**C12:** The school provides an annual audit or review of its finances, prepared by a disinterested party or firm. For the fiscal year before the team visit, the school will provide a full opinion financial audit.

**C13:** The school periodically reviews and evaluates its processes of governance and administration.

**C14:** The school publishes a tuition and fee schedule appropriate to its operations and clientele and a refund policy that is communicated and meets legal and ethical considerations.

**C15:** The school implements appropriate policies and procedure regarding financial reporting and record keeping as necessary to its effective, ethical, and legal operations and is able to evidence that those records are kept in a safe and professional manner.

**C16:** The school complies with the required AWSNA septennial evaluation/accreditation program including a self-study, visitation by an AWSNA team, and prescribed follow-up activity and reports.

**A2:** There is a clearly articulated statement of educational mission, philosophy, and goals, which reflects the individual character of the school, based upon sound Waldorf educational tenets.

**A3:** There is FULL DISCLOSURE of the school's mission, policies, programs and practices.

**A4:** There is CONGRUENCE between the stated mission of the school and the actual program and practices of the school.

## IV. Personnel

### *Overview Focus*

In narrative form, the Self-Study section on Personnel provides an overview of school personnel including the following information:

- A description of faculty and staff recruitment, orientation, and evaluation procedures.
- A description of opportunities and stipulations for faculty professional development and growth and faculty leadership, and a sampling of recent professional undertakings and achievements by the faculty and administration.
- A description of the administrative and support staff structure of the school.

### *Related Questions to Address*

(Rather than answering the questions in a series, use the questions as discussion launching points from which observations and analysis emerge.)

Are teachers prepared through a formal Waldorf preparation program or the equivalent, adequate in number, and appropriately assigned? Is adequate and qualified support staff provided? Are there written employment agreements and benefit programs? What provisions exist for orientation and evaluation of personnel? Are in-service training programs and opportunities for professional growth provided? What provisions exist for termination for cause or non-renewal of contract for poor performance? How are teachers recruited? How are teachers supported and rewarded? Does the school maintain appropriate personnel records? What is the “organizational climate” of the school? Are personnel policies clearly presented in a faculty handbook?

### *Self Study Conclusion*

The Self-Study section on Personnel presents its evaluation of the school’s personnel policies and indicates the conclusions it has drawn from its study, indicating strengths, weaknesses or challenges, and any plans and priorities for the future.

### *Addenda*

Attach at the end of the self-study (in the addenda section) a compiled summary of the last three year’s (including the current year, if available) school statistics, as submitted to AWSNA: personnel count; cultural mixture; salary ranges; teaching experience. (The school may photocopy each section from the submitted AWSNA survey forms and cut/paste as necessary.) (Note: If faculty salary ranges are confidential, this information may be shared privately between a designated person at the school and the AWSNA Visiting Team Leader.)

Attach as well a faculty / administrative directory that lists each faculty member, indicating colleges and degrees, Waldorf preparation, major fields of study, course-load, student load, number of preparations, administrative responsibilities, extracurricular responsibilities, years of teaching experience, years with the school, and professional memberships / affiliations.

Make available to the Visiting Team upon the arrival at the school the following materials: sample faculty hiring letter / contract; school’s official statement on non-discriminatory hiring practices; summary of employee benefits, faculty handbook; any school policies or statements on faculty professional growth and development, faculty evaluation procedures / instrument; individual teacher information form including class schedule for each teacher.

### *Visiting Committee Report Charge*

The Visiting Team makes its independent assessment on the degree to which the AWSNA Shared Principles are being met and the congruence between the school’s stated mission and its practices. The Visiting Team issues its observations, commendations, and recommendations in its report to AWSNA and to the school.

***Relevant AWSNA Shared Principles***

**C7:** The school is in compliance with all applicable laws regarding discrimination based on any and all protected categories, in all areas, including admissions and employment.

**D1:** The administration, teachers and staff are qualified for their positions and responsibilities by education and /or experience. Teachers have a formal preparation, or the equivalent, for Waldorf/Steiner teaching, or are engaged in such preparation.

**D2:** There are clear, established procedures for recruiting, screening, interviewing, hiring, supporting, evaluating, and dismissing of personnel.

**D3:** There are fair and appropriate personnel policies, salaries and benefits for all personnel, and these policies are written and readily available for all co-workers.

**D4:** After mutual agreement as to compensation, term of employment, and principal duties and responsibilities, each teacher and staff member is informed in writing.

**D5:** The school has a clearly, stated program for professional growth, including on-going mentoring.

**D6:** There are adequate procedures for identifying changing needs and priorities in teacher and staff requirements.

**D7:** Every teacher and staff member will participate in a fair and regular form of evaluation.

**D8:** The school has a clearly articulated written policy for expectations of professional behavior.

**D9:** The school keeps accurate and complete personnel records as required by law and as necessary for its effective operations, which include professional qualifications and credentials.

## V. The School Community

### **Overview Focus**

In narrative form, the school provides in its report an overview of the entire school community. Typically, schools assign self-study work in this area to appropriate individuals or committees. In the overall Self-Study on School Community report, the following issues should be addressed:

- Admission/Student Demographics: An assessment of the composition of the student body, its diversity in backgrounds and abilities and the relationship of that diversity to admissions policies; financial aid; criteria for admission, including process for assessing skill levels and needs; program for orientation of new students; analysis of attrition as well as enrollment management/retention strategies.
- Alumni Relations/Development: An assessment of the role of alumni in the continuing life of the school including indication of alumni participation in on-going activities, alumni publications, alumni support of the school, alumni events etc. (One or more alumni should contribute to this narrative.)
- The Parent Community: A description of the role of parents in the life of the school, the parents association, and the extent to which parent-school communication is effective and parent expectations are being met. (One or more parents should contribute to this narrative.)
- The Local Community: A description of the school's interaction with the local community and its role in the larger communities it may serve (state, provincial, regional, national, or international).
- School Climate: An analysis of the culture and ethos of the school and its community, its morale and spirit.
- Gender and Diversity Issues: An analysis of equity issues in terms of staffing, enrollment, compensation, and program as they relate to gender and diversity matters at the school.

### **Related Questions to Address**

(Rather than answering the questions in a series, use the questions as discussion launching points from which observations and analysis emerge.)

**Overall School Community**: How does the school define its community? What is unique about the school community? Has the nature of the school community changed over the course of the school's history? If so, how? Is the nature of the community changing currently? If so, in what direction? What is the profile of the desired board, faculty, student body, and parents of the school?

**Admissions/Student Demographics**: What are the admissions criteria of the school? Is there an integrated plan for marketing/enrollment/financial aid/retention? Is the admissions process nondiscriminatory and in keeping with the school's philosophy? Are prospective parents fully advised of their financial and other obligations? Is there a formal enrollment contract that clearly states parental rights and obligations? Who is responsible for decisions regarding admissions? What types and amounts of scholarships and financial aid are provided? How is financial aid funded? What are the criteria for awarding aid? Who is responsible for decisions regarding financial aid? How does financial aid impact enrollment? Does the school have a marketing plan that takes into account the school's mission and needs, demographics, and long range plan? Is the school forthright in its marketing efforts?

**Alumni Relations/Development**: What is the relationship among the various elements of a development program: marketing, public relations, alumni affairs, and strategic planning? How successful are the fundraising efforts of the school? Does the board direct and share this effort and participate fully in the various campaigns? Does the school take active steps to keep its community informed and to maintain a positive public-relations image? Are appropriate alumni records maintained? Are alumni involved in the life of the school? Does the school have a long range (or strategic) plan, with provision for periodic review and revision? Do the efforts in all of these areas work together for the enhancement of the school?

**The Parent Community:** How and to what extent are parents involved in the school community? What means do parents have to communicate individually and collectively with the school? Do parents know whom to go to with questions, concerns, etc.? Are parents represented on the Board of Trustees? To what extent?

**The Local Community:** What is the role of the school in the local community and the attitude of the local community toward the school? What are the local community resources available, and to what extent does the school use them?

**School Climate:** How would one describe the “school spirit”? What are the factors causing high or low morale? What impressions does a visitor receive? Is there generally a “good feeling” about the school? What degree of “satisfaction” is evidenced by surveys of constituents?

**Gender and Diversity Issues:** How is the school climate perceived by various members and groups within the school community? Is there a commitment to diversity and gender equity in the school’s mission statement and in its long-range planning? Are gender equity and diversity evident in the composition of key constituencies (board, administration, faculty, staff, and student body) and in leadership roles therein? What trends are evident on the gender and diversity front? How are gender and diversity issues considerations for curriculum planning? Do curricular materials, exhibits, library collections, and enrollment reflect the gender and cultural diversity of the school? Is the pedagogy of the school examined in terms of the amount of time various groups of students receive attention from teachers and the varying effectiveness of teaching modes across gender and diversity lines? Are allocations of resources (e.g., for athletic and extracurricular activities) examined in terms of similar expectations of balance?

Is there a dress code and is it equitably applied with respect to gender and diversity differences? What holidays does the school celebrate? Do salary statistics indicate fundamental fairness in compensation along gender and diversity and school division lines? Are anti-harassment policies in place at the school and working? What evidence exists that faculty members are encouraged to develop further knowledge and expertise in the areas of gender and diversity consciousness? What accommodations are made to meet the varying needs of students, parents, and faculty of diverse backgrounds? How does the school respond to conflicts that may arise out of diversity issues?

**Safety Issues:**

Are crisis management, building evacuation plans, safety audits and other emergency protocols in place, readily accessible and understood by all community members? (Safety audits include such things as bullying policies that impact student safety, building safety concerns, playground inspections, building security concerns, etc.)

***Self-Study Conclusions***

The Self-Study on School Community presents its evaluation of the school’s community and indicates the conclusions it has drawn from its study, indicating strengths, weaknesses or challenges, and any plans and priorities for the future.

***Addenda***

Also, attach a compiled summary of the last three years’ (including the current year, if available) school statistics, as submitted to AWSNA: tuition and fees; student count; personnel count; cultural mixture; international students; financial aid & tuition remission; admission activity; attrition; and annual giving. (The school may photocopy each section from the submitted AWSNA Economic Survey forms and cut/paste as necessary.)

Make available to the Visiting Committee upon its arrival to the school copies of admissions materials: application and contract forms, interview and health forms, alumni office publications, student publications, communications to parents, etc.

Also, make available during the visit any school literature in which statements are made on admissions policies and procedures (including any references to financial aid), the official statement on nondiscriminatory admissions practices, as well a photocopy of the school’s official documents and catalog statements to parents regarding their financial obligations upon enrolling a child in the school as well as the standard enrollment contract

***Visiting Committee Report Charge***

The Visiting Team makes its independent assessment on the degree to which the AWSNA Shared Principles are being met and the congruence between the school's stated mission and its practices. The Visiting Team issues its observations, commendations, and recommendations in its report to AWSNA and to the school.

***Relevant AWSNA Shared Principles***

**A8:** The school demonstrates its commitment to inclusiveness through its governance and leadership, curriculum, support programs, staffing, activities, and admissions policies.

**C7:** The school is in compliance with all applicable laws regarding discrimination based on any and all protected categories, in all areas, including admissions and employment.

**E1:** The school has an organization and procedures for effective communication among, and involvement of, parents, students, alumni, and friends of the school in a way that is appropriate to their interests as well as the purposes and objectives of the school.

**E2:** The school has clearly defined and stated student admissions and dismissal policies and procedures consistent with the stated mission and philosophy of the school and that provide the general criteria upon which admissions and dismissals are made.

**E3:** The school only enrolls students whose needs the faculty believes it can meet through the school's programs, services, and activities.

**E4:** Parents and guardians are fully informed of their financial and other responsibilities to the school prior to enrollment.

**E5:** The school has a clearly articulated and written policy of the expected and acceptable behavior of students and parents.

**E6:** The school publishes and follows clearly articulated communication policies and procedures, including grievance procedures.

**E7:** The school demonstrates that it provides adequate and competent supervision of all its students.

**E8:** Sufficient and appropriate disciplinary policies and procedures are implemented to provide for a safe and positive learning environment.

## VI. Conclusion

### *Overview Focus*

In narrative form, the Self-Study Steering Committee writes a brief conclusion to the Self-Study in which the Committee provides the following:

- An assessment of the self-study process itself, and its tribulations and triumphs.
- Some ruminations about the major themes that emerged in the process, in particular ones that may cross the boundaries of various committees and their reports.
- An indication of the imperatives the committee feels. After having studied the school for a year, the Self-Study Steering Committee may feel compelled to urge the school to take certain “next steps.” What should those “next steps” be?

### *Visiting Committee Report Charge*

The Visiting Team makes its independent assessment on the degree to which the AWSNA Shared Principles are being met as a whole and the overall congruence between the school’s stated mission and its practices. The Visiting Team issues its concluding remarks, and its summary major commendations and recommendations in its report to AWSNA and to the school.

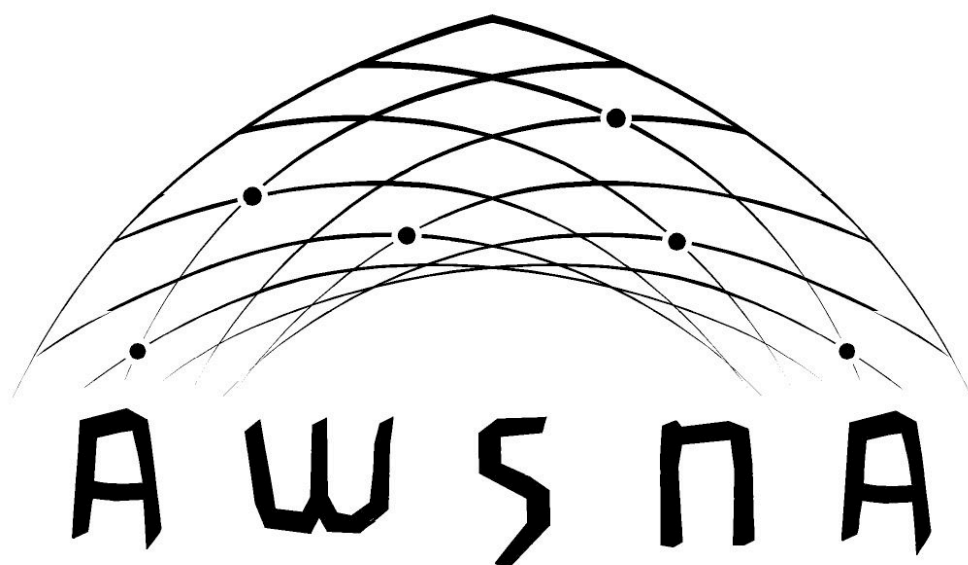
Additionally, the Visiting Team takes a confidential vote on what accreditation recommendation to make to the AWSNA Accreditation Review Committee, but **this vote and recommendation are not shared with the school**. It is the task of the AWSNA Accreditation Review Committee to take under advisement the recommendation of the Visiting Team and make recommendation to the AWSNA delegates for subsequent action.

Finally, the Visiting Team Leader, in an exit report to the school, shares the major findings, commendations, and recommendations (**but not the accreditation level advisement to AWSNA**) with the faculty, board, and administration.





# Part III: Handbook For Visiting Team



**December 2010 Version**

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## Part III: Handbook For Visiting Team

### Introduction

The role of the visiting team leader (VTL) is critical to the success of an evaluation. The VTL's understanding of the evaluation process, and sensitivity, perspective, concern for accuracy, attention to detail, and overall leadership will largely determine the school's eventual feelings about the value of the evaluation/accreditation program. While the school's own self-study is the most important part of the entire process, the visit and the report which follows it will be anticipated with the greatest interest by faculty and staff at the school. A carefully drafted, thoughtful visiting team report will confirm the school's opinion that its own hard work was worthwhile. The VTL's leadership of the visiting team, and the conduct of the team members during the visit, will be equally important in the school's determination that evaluation is a worthwhile enterprise. Finally, the VTL must be completely familiar with the rationale and process of evaluation, and the relationship between evaluation and accreditation in the AWSNA program, as described in the opening sections of the AWSNA Evaluation/ Accreditation Guide. In particular, the VTL must understand and convey to the visiting team the three fundamental concepts: meeting the AWSNA Shared Principles, disclosure, and congruence. The VTL must be certain that these concepts have been articulated clearly to members of the visiting team and that the members are prepared to apply them to their work during the visit.

How does a visiting team leader receive the training necessary to feel competent in this role? First of all, there is the practical experience of having served on visiting teams as a member, and having undergone a self-study and evaluation visit at his or her school. Secondly, there are workshop sessions for representatives from schools about to commence a self-study, for prospective visiting team members, and for visiting team leaders. In addition to delivering the necessary information, these sessions also provide some opportunity to share ideas with, and learn from people experienced in the process. Reading and assimilating the AWSNA Evaluation/ Accreditation Guide is also part of the training process. The single most important step in the training, however, is to serve as an assistant chair of a team led by an experienced leader. The assistant chair takes full part in the visit and usually assists the visiting team leader in handling some meetings and editing of reports. Along with these specific tasks, the assistant chair has an ideal opportunity to observe someone else's organization, orientation of the team, leadership, and reporting before taking on the full responsibility for chairing a team. Chairs can also count upon the full support of the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator.

This handbook is organized to follow, in chronological order, a chair's activities from initial invitation to serve, through consultation and advice to the school, preparation for and implementation of the visit, and the completion of reporting to the school and to AWSNA. The Appendix includes materials that should be useful in briefing the school undergoing the evaluation and the members of the visiting team, along with some checklists and forms that will be used during the process.

While this handbook is intended to assist the VTL in conducting a successful evaluation, no claim is made that it provides all the correct answers in one package. The Accreditation Coordinator of AWSNA, or other experienced team leaders, expect to be available and may be contacted when questions arise. There is also no expectation that the steps in this handbook will be followed slavishly. Effective, sensitive evaluation is too complex a human endeavor to be reduced to simple, foolproof formulas. It is hoped, however, that this handbook will enable the VTL to anticipate questions and to enjoy the confidence of having a tried and true process to follow as closely as is desired.

### *A Note for Experienced Visiting Team Leaders*

It is realized that the experienced team leader may find this handbook more extensive than is found necessary. However, the thought was to err on the side of completeness and to meet the needs of first-time team leaders.

One implication of this approach is that the Handbook contains more than an experienced team leader needs, or, perhaps, wishes to read. It is hoped that the chronological order in the handbook will assist the experienced team leader to find the reminders and presentations on specific matters of greatest interest and value. Also, the VTL will find Appendix P a Checklist for the Visiting Team Leader, outlining in succinct form all the steps in the process. Very experienced AWSNA team leaders sometimes dispense with this Handbook in preference to using the checklist as reminder for the key points to address.

When all is said and done, there are some key assumptions or procedural steps that are more important than others in determining how good, and how useful, the evaluation/accreditation process is for a particular school. It is suggested, then, that even the most experienced visiting team leader will do well to study, review, and plan in order to guarantee that the following essential components of an excellent evaluation are present:

- The commitment of the school to the process and its potential for essential learning and improvement.
- The visiting team leader's understanding of the philosophy behind the AWSNA evaluation/accreditation program and his or her ability to communicate it to the visiting team members.
- The quality of the preliminary on-campus evaluation workshop and the school's early and effective planning for the self-study process.
- The selection of a visiting team of appropriate size, experience, and expertise in terms of the school's self-study design.
- The preliminary visit of the visiting team leader to the school as a means of acquiring complete familiarity with the school and setting the tone of the evaluation visit for the trustees, administration and faculty.
- The quality of the preliminary organization of the visiting team and planning for the evaluation visit.
- The timeliness and quality of communications to visiting team members prior to the visit.
- The effectiveness of the first day orientation for the visiting team and sensitivity to the varying needs for training and advice of team members with varying previous experience.
- The preliminary sharing of findings with the appropriate representative of the school before giving the oral exit report to the school.
- The quality of the oral exit report and the extent to which it meets the expectations of the school.
- The skillful, sensitive editing of the visiting team report to ensure uniformity of format, sound grammar and rhetoric, and clarity in the wording of findings and recommendations communicated to the school.

## Rationale and Overview

There are at least two basic reasons for a school to undergo an evaluation/accreditation program.

1. Accountability: One reason is to satisfy its need for accountability, particularly with respect to the external public. Independent schools are no strangers to accountability itself; the very existence of the school depends upon meeting the expectations of families willing to invest tuition dollars in the school, and the expectations of the school's patrons who provide the voluntary financial support necessary for new facilities, scholarships, endowment, etc. This accountability, however, is entirely internal. It has become increasingly important for schools to demonstrate accountability to outside groups such as colleges and universities which enroll graduates, foundations and corporations, federal agencies such as the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and also, in varying measure, to state and provincial agencies or departments and ministries of education. Thus, the accreditation that a school receives through the evaluation program is a highly visible demonstration that the school meets public accountability. Independent

schools can most effectively regulate themselves through voluntary submission to an independent school evaluation process, over which they have some collaborative control.

2. School Improvement: A more compelling reason exists as well. The evaluation/accreditation program assists the school in its own aspirations for improvement and development. AWSNA schools are generally strong enough so that accreditation is of secondary concern. For them, therefore, the value of the process lies largely in finding ways in which the school's educational goals can be more effectively met than at present. Thus, while the visiting team leader serves as the official representative of AWSNA, and its evaluation/accreditation principles, it is vital that he or she understands the pivotal role that the visiting team can play in encouraging a school to grow and develop.

## The Self-Study

The visiting team leader must understand, and be able to explain the sequence and flow of the various components in the seven-year evaluation cycle. (See the Overview of the evaluation/accreditation program in the opening of the AWSNA Evaluation/Accreditation Guide.) In addition, the AWSNA Guide for Self-Study describes the self-study process in detail. The purpose of the self-study is to produce a comprehensive, carefully developed statement of a school's strengths and weaknesses in each of its areas and programs. It is part of the visiting team leader's responsibility to see that the required areas are included in the self-study and the visiting team report.

## Functions of the Visiting Team

The most important function of the visiting team is to review carefully the school's findings from the self-study, to check them against the documentation and background information, and to check them against the team's observations during the evaluation visit. All the specific observation activity during the visit (classroom visits, meetings with various school constituencies, observation of activities, conversations with faculty and students) will provide countless opportunities for the visiting team to study, validate, or question the self-study findings. While the visiting team must begin with the school's self-study (reading it carefully before the arrival on campus), it must also be careful that it does not become limited by it. Another significant function of the visiting team is to help the school see what, if anything, it missed in conducting its self-examination. Some issues may be more easily perceived by objective outsiders than by faculty who are immersed in the school on a daily basis. If the team reports findings that are different from those of the school, it must be sure that it has the evidence to back up such findings. In making its determinations, the team must be sure that it uses the philosophy of the school and not those of individual team members as a basic framework.

## Roles of the Visiting Team Member

The visiting team leader must also understand, and be able to articulate, the functions of the visiting team members. This is particularly important during the orientation of the visiting team on the first day of the visit. The role of the individual evaluator is a tripartite one:

1. First, the evaluator should understand that he or she is a guest of the school, who has been invited to share experience and expertise with the school. The school has a right to expect that their guest will provide the sensitivity, and personal and professional courtesy, that can be expected of any guest.
2. The evaluator, like the visiting team leader, is also a representative of AWSNA on a fact finding mission for the Association. It might be said that the visiting team members serve as guardians of the Association's principles in the evaluation process.
3. Each evaluator is also a member of a team, a team that reports as a whole. The individual insight and perspective of each team member is an important part of the deliberative process, but the visiting team is asked to limit its findings to those that represent consensus.



An individual finding may well be correct, even without general team agreement, but only so much can be done and observed in a short visit. Thus, if individual findings do not secure the acquiescence of the group, they cannot be included in the visiting team report.

It is possible that evaluators might occasionally feel conflict in these three roles. At such times, the visiting team leader can be very helpful in gracefully and diplomatically resolving such conflict.

## Recommendation on Accreditation Level

A final function of the visiting team is to make a recommendation to the AWSNA Accreditation Review Committee and, through it, to the delegates from AWSNA schools concerning the accreditation status of the school. The basis of this recommendation is the school's statements about itself, especially the statement of philosophy and goals, and the team's judgment whether or not the school has demonstrated that it meets the disclosure and congruence principles. Consideration should also be given to the published AWSNA Shared Principles and the team's determination whether or not the school's compliance with these principles is adequate.

The recommendation of the visiting team can be in one of the following forms:

**Full:** Unanimous recommendation for full accreditation.

**Conditional:** Recommendation for a full or a shorter term accreditation with specific conditions for follow-up and remediation relative to a Shared Principle, perhaps in a specific time period.

**Denied:** Recommendation that the school not be approved for accreditation with specific reasons for this recommendation.

It is expected that the visiting team will report as a group, and every attempt should be made by the visiting team leader and the team to achieve consensus.

If an adverse recommendation regarding accreditation is anticipated by the visiting team leader, advice from the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator will usually be sought, and the team must cite specific items - disclosure, congruence, or Shared Principles - with which the school is not in compliance. There is no need for the team to arrive at consensus on the AWSNA Shared Principles one by one. Rather, the team should cite specific principles to support any conditions it might set or to justify a recommendation to deny or remove accreditation.

**In a separate letter from the visiting team leader to the Accreditation Review Committee, the visiting team recommendation is submitted to AWSNA. It is not shared with the school, and it is not part of the exit report to the school**

## Before the AWSNA Visit: Preliminary Steps

The invitation to serve as visiting team leader will usually be extended by the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator after consultation with the school. Before accepting the invitation, the potential visiting team leader must examine realistically his or her schedule for the next year. The assignment does require significant time over an extended period. Prior to the typical four days of the evaluation visit, the visiting team leader will need to make one preliminary visit to the school. After the evaluation visit, time will be required to complete the writing and editing of the report so that it can be sent to the school and the AWSNA Accreditation Office within four weeks after the visit. The potential visiting team leader may also want to find out more about the school to be visited, and the nature of anticipated major issues before making a commitment. Thus, he or she may wish to consult with the Leader for the Region who will be able to provide this information. The visiting team leader will be

reimbursed by the host school for all travel expenses; by AWSNA policy, honoraria are not involved for either the visiting team leader or members of the visiting team.

The dates for the visit should be set in consultation with the school and the Accreditation Coordinator. Evaluations are either in the fall or in the winter. It should be remembered that it would be difficult to secure visiting team members at times that are too close to principal vacation periods.

## **Selection of the Visiting Team**

Selection of Visiting Team members is primarily handled collaboratively by the AWSNA Accreditation Office, the co-accrediting agency, and the school. The size of the team depends on the breadth of the school's program.

## **Preliminary (Orientation) Visit to the School by the Visiting Team Leader**

It is imperative that the visiting team leader visits the school, preferably no later than three months prior to the team visit. The visiting team leader should become thoroughly familiar with the school's history, its philosophy and goals, its campus and vital statistics, the nature of the community, its financial condition, any special issues involved in the current evaluation, any problems it may be facing, and the results of the previous evaluation if the school is already accredited. The visiting team leader should use this visit to check on logistics (including transportation, lodging, meals, and meeting room for the team) and all preparatory arrangements for the visit. Since almost all evaluation reports are now done on computer, there should be a discussion of computer hardware and software that can be made available to the visiting team. Compatibility between computers used by team members and those available at the visiting team leader's school should be achieved if possible; such compatibility can significantly reduce the time necessary for editing and compiling of the visiting team report.

Early in the process, the visiting team leader should also make certain that the self-study is well underway, that there is agreement on areas to be covered, and that the evaluation step is included. The visiting team leader should check on board involvement in the self-study and appropriate availability of key trustees at the time of the visitation. An opportunity for the visiting team leader and the board chair to meet informally should be provided if possible. There should be clear agreement on the list of necessary supplementary materials to be developed and to be available to the visiting team upon its arrival.

In addition to conversations with the School Coordinator for accreditation and/or the Self-Study Steering Committee, there should be a brief, general meeting with the faculty. In this meeting, the visiting team leader should say something about his or her experience with evaluation, provide a general outline of activities during the visit, and do everything possible to engender a sense of confidence and comfort within the school. In particular, the faculty should be told again that the assessment of individual performance is not part of the process, and the evaluation visit will be most beneficial if the conduct of the school during the days of the visit is as normal as possible.

## **Schedule for the Evaluation Visit**

The preliminary visit also provides a good opportunity for the visiting team leader and the school to agree upon a schedule for the four days of the evaluation visit. (See Appendix P.) Most of the time during the school day should be left as free as possible for classroom visits and meetings with faculty, students, parents, alumni, and trustees. If there are special weekly events (such as meetings of the administrative team or curriculum committee, etc.), it is good to build these into the schedule.

The school should be reminded that social activities are not to be provided, except for an opportunity on the first day for faculty and team members to meet each other informally. This one social event is frequently an afternoon reception which includes members of the community followed by a supper with a smaller group of faculty and board hosting. The school and the visiting team leader should devise some system for encouraging evaluators to meet faculty or administrators with whom they will be spending significant time during the visit. Otherwise, there should be no attempt to entertain the team, and the evening meal on the second and third days should be for the team by itself.

Team members may have breakfast at their accommodations and will eat lunch with students and faculty at the scheduled luncheon times.

Some early planning also needs to be devoted to scheduling meetings with trustees, parents, and others who are not generally available during the school day. Although the number of such meetings will vary with the size and complexity of the school, the following groups generally need to be seen by one or more members of the visiting team: trustees (perhaps the Executive Committee or board committee chairs), parent association leaders and class representatives, alumni representatives, and students. Any ad hoc meetings may also be scheduled after consultation with the school.

Finally, the visiting team leader and the school should agree upon a time, format, and general content of the oral exit report that will occur at the end of the visit. What will vary are the composition of those who will attend and the desired length of time. For example, does the school intend to invite trustees, and parent representatives, or will the meeting be for administration and faculty only? Is the oral report expected to be brief (limited to basic acknowledgment, major commendations and recommendations, and the nature of follow-up steps)? Typically, large schools, previously evaluated, expect such a report. If the school is small, relatively isolated, new to the process, it may wish a more ceremonial and informative closing presentation. The visiting team leader is well advised to obtain an early sense of what is expected, remembering that no full presentation of the visiting team report is possible. The visiting team leader needs to save time, during the visit, for careful preparation of an appropriate exit report. All team members should be present for the oral exit report.

## **Communications to the Visiting Team**

There should be three mailings to the visiting team, one of which includes a welcome letter from the visiting team leader:

- The initial letter to acknowledge the participation of the team member from the school, with biographical data form (See Appendix C & D).
- A mailing from the school (five weeks prior to the visit) that includes the following:
  - Travel directions, lodging information, and general visit logistics
  - Letter of greeting from the visiting team leader, with preliminary orientation outline from AWSNA (See Appendix E) and the specific four-day visitation schedule (in Appendix G)
  - Assignment of areas of responsibility with request that draft of reports in these areas be brought to the visit.
  - Visiting Team roster, in finalized form, with the school information and visit assignments.
- Mailing of the final self-study report: At least five weeks prior to the visit the school duplicates the report and sends it to each member of the visiting team, to the readers from the AWSNA Accreditation Review Committee, and to the AWSNA Accreditation Office. The latter mailing should include a hardcopy as well as in electronic format.

## **Preliminary Organization of the Visiting Team**

The organization of the visiting team will depend upon the size and structure of the school, whether the evaluation/accreditation is simultaneous with another organization, and the competencies of the visiting team members. The material below summarizes some typical variations in the pattern of organization. The school is to include the self-study areas required by AWSNA as indicated in the AWSNA Guide for Self-Study. The visiting team leader should, as far as possible, be guided by the organization of the school's self-study in making assignments for visiting team members. Some strategic clustering of areas may be necessary. A typical load for each member of the visiting team is to be responsible for writing for one major area, and to provide assistance in two other areas.

The areas required by AWSNA usually fall into five general areas (Philosophy, Program, Governance, Personnel, and Community). The Table of Contents for Part II of the AWSNA Evaluation/Accreditation Guide may be used as a guide for setting up visiting team committee assignments, as could the school's self-study report chapters. Also, available to the Visiting Team Leader is a template available electronically.

## **During the Visit: Organization, Orientation, and Leadership**

### ***Arrival, Logistics, and Initial Meetings***

**The Team Gathers:** The visiting team leader should plan to arrive at the school at least two or three hours in advance of the initial meeting with the visiting team. This provides an opportunity for a final "walk through" the schedule and logistics with the Self-Study Steering Committee chair and a last minute check with the school. In particular, the room that will be used by the visiting team during the visit should be checked carefully for equipment, supplies, and a complete set of the self-study documents. The Steering Committee chair should be asked to supply a wall chart, showing the names of all administrators and faculty and their schedules, with space in which visiting team members can indicate which administrators and faculty they have visited during the four days.

All members of the visiting team need to have arrived, and out-of-town people checked into their lodging, by the time scheduled for the initial meeting with the team. If the majority of team members are from out of town, it may make sense for this meeting to be held at the lodging facility, rather than at the school. This meeting should be a short one, but it provides time for a round of self-introductions by the team members, an overview of the schedule, and briefing on the handling of expenses and reimbursement. The visiting team leader should help the team understand that the social occasion that will occur soon with the school community (reception and dinner) is for the purpose of meeting informally with representatives of the host school. It is not a time for penetrating questions about the school or the self-study.

Occasionally a representative of the school may be present at the first meeting, especially if there are any special or confidential circumstances that the team should know about (such as a recent major disciplinary incident or a particular faculty or administrative problem). If the school has some special issues for which the help of the team is desired, this first meeting is probably the best time for such a briefing.

**Tour of the School:** Next, the visiting team should experience an orientation tour of the buildings and grounds. Visiting team members should have a map or floor plan in the information package awaiting their arrival. Visiting team members and the host school administration and faculty should wear nametags for the duration of the visit. It is usually best if the team is split into small touring groups, each hosted by someone from the faculty or a student leader enlisted for this purpose.

Reception for entire school community:

Mutual introductions: A representative of the school generally extends an official welcome to the team and introduces the Self-Study Steering Committee chair, people in key positions in the school, and the president of the board of trustees (or other board representative). The visiting team leader then introduces the members of the visiting team and may give some general acknowledgments and remarks about plans for the visitation.

Dinner with School Leadership:

Brief remarks by a representative of the school at a dinner for the leaders of the school and the visiting team.

It is important that any social events that are scheduled that evening end early. The organization and orientation meeting for the visiting team is vitally important, and it should begin by 7:00 p.m. if at all possible. If this meeting is to be held at a place of lodging nearby, rather than at the school, transportation time should be considered.

## Orientation/Training of the Visiting Team

### **THE FIRST DAY**

The visiting team leader can expect that the majority of the team members have had some previous experience with evaluation, either through service on another evaluation team or being involved at his or her school. There will always be, by AWSNA policy, a team member or two that have not had previous experience on an evaluation team (since this is the only way that new people can be initiated into the evaluation process). Thus, the visiting team leader should plan the evening orientation session as if everyone were a beginner, unless it has been possible to provide an earlier special orientation session for beginners. Other means for assisting beginners include pairing them with more experienced evaluators or meeting with them at breakfast on the next day. AWSNA encourages all team members new to the process to attend the training session at the annual AWSNA Summer Teacher Conference.

The visiting team leader will, of course, draw upon his or her personal skills and experience in handling this meeting. The visiting team leader must try to be sensitive to the background, quickness, and needs of the visiting team members. This is a time when the stage is set for building a team and developing confidence in the visiting team leader's leadership and organizational skill. While no two orientation sessions will be exactly alike, it is hoped that the orientation will at least touch upon the following: (If necessary, some topics can be carried over to a meeting of the team during the next day.)

- Philosophy of the AWSNA evaluation/accreditation program: The visiting team leader may want to distribute copies of the overview of the evaluation/accreditation program from the AWSNA Handbook for Evaluation Visit. In particular, use of the concepts of Disclosure and Congruence should be explained and discussed.
- Purpose and overview of the evaluation visit.
- Role and functions of the visiting team member.
- Marching Orders: That the evaluation of the school is to be based upon the school's own general philosophy and goals and not those of the evaluator or the evaluator's school. One of the most important qualities of people recommended for evaluation teams is the ability to understand the perspective of another school. Nothing will destroy the credibility of the evaluation process more rapidly than individual comments such as, "At our school, we do this...."
- Policy that there is to be no assessment of the individual performance of teachers or administrator: This means that individuals are not to be singled out for praise or individual criticism. Special care needs to be exercised in areas for which only one faculty member is responsible.
- Orientation to the visitation schedule and to the various school schedules.

- Explanation of visiting team coverage and assignments: Be sure that all the areas required by AWSNA in the self-study (See AWSNA Guide for Self-Study, Table of Contents) are included. Try to determine the level of comfort with assignments and make adjustments if necessary. The visiting team leader should make a final check to be sure that there is coverage of all areas in the Self-Study Report.
- Guidelines on the use of the school's self-study: The team should start its review with the self-study report and supporting material, but it should not be limited by them.
- Use of the previous septennial evaluation report: If the school has previously been evaluated, the report should be available for the visiting team. The team is well advised, however, not to refer to this too early in the visitation. It is good to determine whether or not "unfinished business" is left over from the previous experience, but the team's current assessment of the school should be based upon the current self-study and on the team members' fresh observations and judgment.
- Use of the AWSNA *Shared Principles*: The team members will have received by mail copies of the Shared Principles. These should be reviewed by the team. The main principals to be used in the assessment of the school are the concepts of Disclosure and Congruence; the AWSNA Shared Principles were not designed to serve as prescriptive evaluation standards. On the other hand, the principles may help visiting team members, particularly inexperienced ones, know what to look for, and the principles may provide a useful checklist for each of the areas being reviewed. The visiting team leader should also mention briefly, the options that the team has in making its recommendation concerning accreditation status of the school.
- Practical advice on observation, recording impressions, and data gathering: Here is an opportunity for more experienced team members to contribute their ideas and experience. Class visits do not need to be for an entire class period. Notes should not be taken while sitting in the classroom; such notes should be recorded after the evaluator has left the classroom. It may be helpful to suggest certain things to look for, or consider, in a classroom visit (i.e., classroom arrangement and ambiance, evident student engagement in learning activities, use of materials, etc.) and, perhaps, to recommend items for a checklist or observation sheet. Generally, there should not be more than one evaluator at a time in a classroom. Classroom visitors must take no part whatsoever in the classroom activities (unless called upon by the teacher).
- Guidance and advice on the writing of reports - format, content and style: There may not be time enough to complete this orientation during this first meeting; if this is the case, it should be included early in the second evening's meeting. Whenever this orientation occurs, the visiting team leader needs to provide direct instruction concerning format (use of third person, use of phrases such as "the Team recommends..." rather than "the school must (or should) ...", etc.) and the desired nature and format of recommendations. Team members need a briefing on the computer equipment available and efforts that have been made to achieve compatibility with respect to software.
- Caution against sharing preliminary findings with faculty: The visiting team reports as a whole and everyone must guard against revealing findings before the team as a group has reviewed them.
- Caution that all deliberations of the visiting team are confidential: Members of the visiting team must not discuss the evaluation when they return to their home schools. This is particularly crucial when visiting team members come from the same locality as the host school.
- Determination of any special groups of people that the evaluators need to see (such as trustees, parent leaders, student leaders, administrative committees, curriculum committees, departments as a whole, etc.): If arrangements for meetings of special groups have not already been made, the Self-Study Steering Committee chair needs to be notified as soon as possible.
- Orientation to the school's mission and statements of philosophy and goals. One possible approach is to ask members of the visiting team to identify the major points that should be looked for during the visit and to ask someone to record these on newsprint sheets that can

be posted during the visit. The point of this exercise is to help the team focus on the school's philosophy against which observations and assessments are to be made.

### **Specific Responsibilities of the Visiting Team Leader**

The visiting team leader will have to limit the number of areas in which he or she will be personally involved in order that appropriate time can be devoted to monitoring, coordination, "cheerleading" as necessary, and providing liaison with the school. Typically, the visiting team leader will limit himself in areas in which he can participate. The visiting team leader should remember that he or she will have to write the introduction and conclusion to the visiting team report and the summary section covering the major commendations and recommendations, in addition to any other areas for which he or she assumes the writing responsibility. Time will also be needed for drafting the oral exit report on the last morning of the visit.

The visiting team leader must not underestimate the significance of his or her role as a teacher of the team. Teaching of the evaluation process - including the art and science of observation, formulating findings, and writing reports - is a major part of the first evening's orientation, but it will also be necessary, on an individual basis, throughout the visit. Efforts need to be made continually to identify and to assist team members who may need extra help and encouragement.

In any event, it is necessary to develop a staggered schedule for the receipt of first draft reports since they cannot all be reviewed on the last day.

Most importantly, it is the visiting team leader's responsibility to maintain control over the evaluation schedule, to see that the scheduled group meetings begin promptly, to lead the team meetings in a business-like manner, and to limit distractions.

### **Meetings with the Team as a Whole; Agenda for Days Two-Four**

#### ***THE SECOND DAY***

This day should be devoted to seeing the school at work, and the visiting team should be urged to begin visits and observation at the very beginning of the school day. If possible, there should be visits to every classroom and teacher. At least one visiting team member should observe each of the major scheduled activities. The team should have lunch at school; lunchtime is a good opportunity to visit informally with students.

Typically, specially scheduled meetings with trustees, parent association representatives, and alumni association representatives will occur during the lunch hour or in the late afternoon at the end of the school day. Team members not involved in these special meetings should observe after-school care, athletic and other activities that might occur after classes.

The evening session on the second day should be scheduled to begin as soon as possible after the evening meal (which the team should take by itself). This session will usually begin with each member of the team reporting briefly on first impressions. Sometimes this is structured by asking the team to "brainstorm" its impressions that are then recorded on newsprint and posted on the wall. After this, the team may be asked to "brainstorm" the principal issues that appear to be emerging; again, these are recorded on newsprint, without further discussion at this time. This exercise may be very helpful in deciding on major commendations and recommendations the next day. Probably no more than a half-hour should be devoted to this. Visiting team leaders should be aware that this evening might be the time when team members may feel most "down" about the evaluation. They arrived at the school full of high expectation, but during the first day, encounter the less positive aspects of the school and are sometimes surprised by them.

If necessary, the visiting team leader should say something about this typical pattern, indicating that teams always find such negative impressions more balanced by the end of the visit.

The visiting team leader will then need to complete orientation on the topic of writing of reports. In particular, there should be specific discussion of the nature of a good recommendation. The team must be reminded that the school is required to respond to all recommendations, in the visiting team report. Therefore, recommendations should be concerned only with significant issues. They should be specific with respect to the desired outcome of a recommendation, but should not prescribe the process by which the desired result is to be achieved. Recommendations that may involve significant financial expenditure, or changes in school structure, should be handled with particular care.

For example, "The AWSNA visiting team recommends that there be more books in the library" is too global. Better would be "The AWSNA visiting team recommends that the library collection in Art and Music be expanded." Also, "The AWSNA visiting team recommends the hiring of another full-time English teacher" is too prescriptive and does not identify the issue to be addressed. Better would be, "The AWSNA visiting team recommends that the load of class teachers be reviewed with respect to number of preparations, students, and administrative responsibilities; it is also recommended that means be sought to reduce what appears to be a heavy time burden." As one more example, "The AWSNA visiting team recommends that the school develop its academic schedule on some other basis than faculty convenience" is too attributive and judgmental. The team should stick to what is observable and should not speculate on motives or attitudes that can only be guessed. Better would be, "The AWSNA visiting team recommends that the schedule be studied carefully: the placing of academic classes after lunch does not provide students with a change of pace to balance the day. It also appears that much of the afternoon time is needed for the practical and fine arts." If not done earlier, the visiting team leader will also need to provide instruction on the use of a uniform format for writing of reports:

- Overview: a general appraisal of one or two paragraphs, describing the program as it currently operates and the extent to which it functions effectively and manifests the stated mission of the school.
- Commendations: a list of up to four or five items worthy of note as unusually strong aspects of the program. (Avoid any specific references to individuals.) Use a lead-in clause, with bullet points all in parallel grammatical form: e.g.,

The AWSNA visiting team commends the school for its...

(1) Development of...

(2) Decision to.... (Etc.)

- Recommendations: a list of up to four or five items, prioritized, that address perceived weaknesses or challenges. (Avoid any specific references to individuals.) Use a lead-in clause, with bullet points all in parallel grammatical form: e.g.,

The AWSNA visiting team recommends that the school...

(1) Consider....

(2) Develop.... (Etc.)

During this evening session, an attempt should be made to review some of the reports to lessen the burden later on. Those responsible for Philosophy & Goals, School & Community, Business, Development, Admissions, Facilities, and Library are often able to prepare a preliminary report at the end of the first day. Team members responsible for such areas must, of course, know of this expectation ahead of time, and it is very helpful to have reports read in as final form as possible, since speaking from extensive or disorganized notes can be time-consuming. Team members may be able to identify their principal tasks for the next day and to indicate areas, if



any, for which assistance may be needed. The session should conclude with a brief reminder and revisions if necessary, of the next day's schedule.

### **THE THIRD DAY**

The work of the second day should be continued. Conferences with administrators, students, faculty, staff, parents, and trustees should be completed. Team members should attempt to talk to representatives of each group in both formal and informal situations. Again, the Team should take advantage of the luncheon period for informal conversations.

The evening session is likely to be a long one and should be scheduled to begin as soon as possible after the evening meal (again, for the team alone). It may be possible to start some of these deliberations in the late afternoon before supper, but the team usually needs this time for final observations and organization of reports. The first order of business is for all team members that did not report during the second evening to share their commendations and recommendations with the team as a whole. Once again, it is helpful for team members to have completed a first draft before arriving on campus and to read this. They may also want to identify earlier impressions that have changed after more extensive observation.

A second crucial piece of business for this session is to consider the major commendations and recommendations that are to be included in the report summary and which are to represent the nucleus of the oral exit report. Reference to the first impressions and issues that were brainstormed the evening before may be useful. If possible, consensus on the major commendations and recommendations should be developed, but this may not be possible until the visiting team leader has compiled a draft to be reviewed at a meeting on the morning of the fourth day. Consensus must be achieved, if not before, at the meeting on the fourth day.

Some time should be devoted to identifying areas or issues that need to be checked further the next day. There should also be a final check on the extent to which the faculty and administration have been visited. If the wall chart shows any administrators or faculty who have not yet been visited, such visitations should be assigned for the next morning.

The final activity for this evening is the team's reaching consensus with respect to the accreditation, or re-accreditation, of the school. This may require additional discussion of the disclosure and congruence principles as well as the AWSNA Shared Principles. If there are complications, or if an adverse recommendation for accreditation is likely, the visiting team leader is asked to call the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator before the team makes a final determination of its recommendation. If necessary, this recommendation can be finalized at the final meeting of the team on the morning of the fourth day. An adverse recommendation must be based on demonstrable and significant deviation from the Shared Principles, demonstrable inadequacy of disclosure of mission or program, or significant inconsistency between the stated mission of the school and the results as observed by the visiting team.

### **THE FOURTH DAY**

The morning should be devoted to final visitations, obtaining of last minute information, and the writing of reports. Thus, team presence at the school, or at least in classrooms, during the morning may well be minimal. As soon as any team member has completed a report, it should be submitted to the visiting team leader, or assistant chair for immediate review and editing. Suggested changes should be approved by the team leader and, if necessary, a final draft should be prepared.

There will usually be a final meeting of the team as a whole in the late morning. If consensus has not been reached on the report's major commendations and recommendations, it must be reached at this meeting. Also, agreement upon the team's recommendation concerning accreditation must be finalized, if this was not achieved the preceding evening. Team member

reports that have not been shared with the team as a whole earlier should also be read at this time. By noon all reports should be submitted so that the visiting team leader can start assembling material for the oral report to be given during the afternoon.

Before the end of the deliberations, the visiting team leader should distribute to each team member a copy of the Confidential Rating Sheet of Visiting Team Chair (see Appendix T), and ask each member to complete the form and send it to the AWSNA Accreditation Office. It is vitally important that no team member be allowed to leave until he or she has submitted all reports and until after the oral exit report is delivered.

### **Preliminary Sharing of Findings with the School**

The visiting team leader, with the assistant chair, should conduct an exit interview with a representative of the school to report the principal findings of the visit. A main purpose is to ensure that the school will not be surprised by anything that will be presented in the oral exit report. This interview is to be held before the oral exit report to the faculty, board, administration and staff. **No indication is to be given regarding the visiting team's recommendation to AWSNA regarding a level of accreditation.**

### **Oral Exit Report**

The oral exit report is delivered by the team chair with all team members present and participating, if possible. There are two principal purposes. First, an attempt should be made to alleviate the understandable apprehensions of the school community. The self-study and evaluation process are usually intense, if not grueling, experiences for the school. Thus appropriate, honest, kind words of acknowledgment and comfort will be particularly appreciated.

The second purpose is to share some of the principal findings of the visiting team with the school in advance of receipt of the formal report. The visiting team leader needs to understand that every word is likely to have momentous significance. Therefore, both content and phrasing must be planned carefully. The visiting team leader should also remember that such occasions will have the complete attention of those present and, yet, what is said is often not that which is heard. This report is not easy to make. It should be friendly, yet businesslike; general, yet definite; it should praise while critiquing. It should not take more than thirty minutes. Casual, extemporaneous remarks should be avoided. Only questions of clarification should be considered.

After thanks to the host school for its courtesy and hospitality, the visiting team leader should say something about the quality of the school's self-study and apparent efforts to learn from the process. The visiting team leader usually acknowledges the limitations caused by a short visit to the school and the necessarily crowded visitation schedule. He or she should then outline briefly the forthcoming steps including finalizing of the visiting team report, review and action by the Accreditation Review Committee and AWSNA delegates, and follow-up by the school leading to the Response Report/ Action Plan and three-year Progress Report.

The visiting team leader should next undertake to share the content of the visiting team report summary. He or she should explain that the comments will deal only with the major, overriding observations and findings, and that commendations and recommendations for each area will be coming to the school when the report is finalized. It is appropriate to remind those present that the visiting team report represents the consensus of the team and not the opinion of an individual or individual committee. Before giving the major commendations and recommendations agreed to by the team, the visiting team leader will usually provide an overview with general observations and highlights from the evaluation that are not included in the team's major commendations and recommendations. **No indication is to be given regarding the visiting team's recommendation to AWSNA regarding accreditation.**

The visiting team leader should close with a final note of gratitude, but should not offer to take questions or comments at this time.

## Preparation of the Visiting Team Report

The raw material for the body of the report will be in the hands of the visiting team leader before the visiting team leaves the school. The body of the report must cover all of the areas that the school covered in its self-study. The template created for this purpose should be utilized. The basic tasks include the following:

- Edit all sections of the report; check for uniformity of format, grammar, diction, tone, and clarity. (Some visiting team leaders choose to stay at the school the evening of the fourth day to complete the editing of the report before returning to their own schools and being diverted by all the catch-up work on the home front.)
- Write a short introduction (brief history of the school, noting any recent major changes) and a short conclusion (summing up the spirit of the experience of the visit and the sense of the school at this juncture).
- If a report has been drastically edited, send the changes to the team member who wrote it as a matter of information.
- Send a courtesy copy of edited draft to the school; ask for corrections concerning factual information or omissions only.
- Prepare final draft, including all the required components in the following order:
  - Title Page, including school name, cooperative accrediting agency (if applicable), date of visit & names of visiting team members
  - Table of Contents (with page numbers for the various report sections)
  - Disclaimer Sheet (See Appendix S)
  - School Profile (from school's Self-Study Report)
  - AWSNA Visiting Team Roster (noting home school and areas of responsibility for evaluation visit)
  - The School's Mission/Philosophy Statement (from school's Self-Study Report)
  - Visiting Team Leader's Introduction, including Brief History of the School
  - Body of the report (See Appendix Q for list of all report areas to be included in the report.)
  - List of Major Commendations and Major Recommendations
  - Conclusion.
- Mail, within four weeks of the visit, two copies of the final report to the school, one hard copy and an electronic copy (either as an e-mail attachment or on a disk) to the AWSNA Accreditation Office. and if a dual evaluation is involved, copies as requested by the other accrediting body. Attach a cover letter to the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator and the Accreditation Review Committee containing the recommendation of the visiting team concerning the level of accreditation.

## Co- Accreditation with Other Associations

### *Guidelines & Procedures*

A number of AWSNA schools also seek accreditation by other regional accrediting organizations, and sometimes a state or provincial evaluation will occur along with the AWSNA evaluation. If a dual evaluation is involved, please see Appendix X for *Guidelines for Dual Accreditations*. AWSNA and other evaluation procedures are generally similar. Any differences in timing or procedure need to be worked out early in the process to guarantee that AWSNA requirements are met as well as those of the other organization.

In dual evaluations, AWSNA will work with the school and, as necessary, with the other organization to ensure appropriate representation from both associations on the visiting teams

(generally, half from each organization). There may be appointed to the team someone to serve as assistant chair, and the AWSNA visiting team leader will need to work closely with this person with respect to both preliminary planning as well as the visit itself. In the writing of AWSNA dual evaluation reports, care must be taken to ensure reference to both associations throughout, to use such terminology as AWSNA/Other Organization visiting team, and that required supplementary documents from both associations are included (separate AWSNA and other organization's disclaimers, for example).

## **Final Requirements**

### ***Acknowledgement***

There are a few odds and ends to be completed before the visiting team leader closes the file on the evaluation. First of all, "Thank You" notes should be sent to members of the visiting team from the visiting team leader, even though it is anticipated that the school will also do this.

### ***Ratings for Team Members***

Each member of the visiting team should be rated for his or her performance during the visitation. Send to the AWSNA Accreditation Office, a copy of the visiting team roster on which you have placed a rating score, 1-5 (1 = poor, 5= excellent) next to name of each team member: determine the rating for each team member on the basis of that member's overall knowledge, quality of written work, observation skills, initiative, rapport with school and other team members, and general sensitivity. These ratings are treated on a confidential basis, but they are of great assistance in putting together visiting teams at a future time. (See Appendix U)

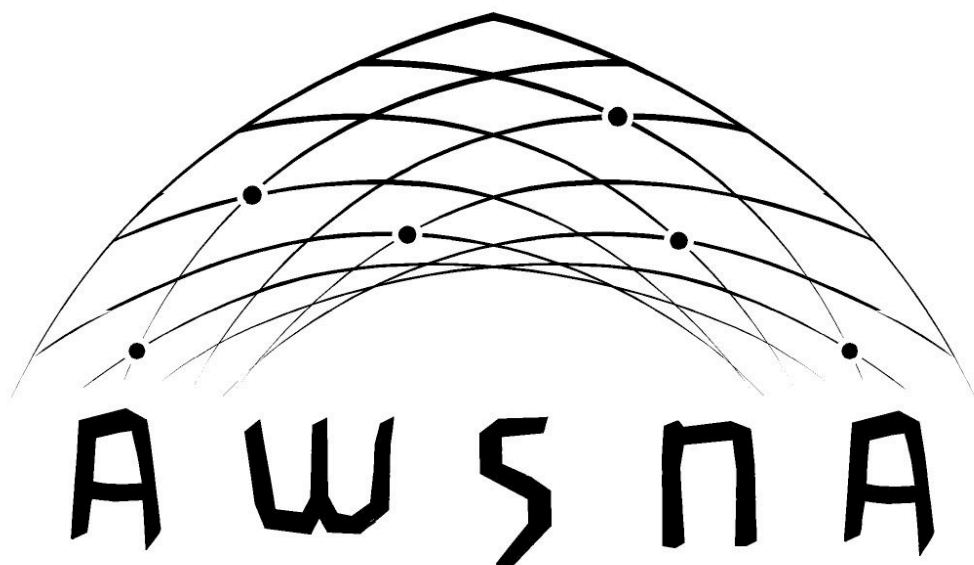
### ***Final Notes***

For the most part, all follow-up activities after finalizing of the visiting team report will be the responsibility of the AWSNA Accreditation Office and Accreditation Review Committee. If there has been a conditional accreditation, sometimes the visiting team leader or other designated person will be asked to make a follow-up visit to the school. A copy of the school's response report is available to the visiting team leader as a courtesy, upon request.

The AWSNA evaluation/accreditation program undergoes constant examination. The Accreditation Review Committee, the Leadership Council, the Executive Team, and the Delegates from full member schools may periodically review the entire program: Shared Principles, process, materials, follow-up procedures, etc. Thus, the visiting team leader can make a valuable contribution to maintaining the quality of the program, and improving it, by sending suggestions and comments to the AWSNA Accreditation Office, or Accreditation Review Committee. No suggested refinements are more valuable than those that are derived from actual experience.



# Part IV: Appendix



**December 2010 Version**

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## Appendix A: AWSNA Application for Accreditation

- 1.) Basic School Information: Please submit a copy of the most recent AWSNA Annual Report filed in the Spring.
- 2.) Describe the school's membership status with WECAN.
- 3.) Comment briefly on separate sheets, giving information about your school pertinent to the AWSNA Shared Principles. (The numbers at the end of each item are keyed to the principles.) If preferred, documentation may be provided by referring to copies of relevant statements from the school's brochure, by-laws, handbooks, and other available materials.

### A: Purpose, Goals and Philosophy

1. Describe your school's relationship to anthroposophy. (A1)
2. Attach copy of school's mission statement, and/or statement of philosophy, and statement of major goals or objectives. (A2)
3. How is the statement of educational mission, philosophy, and goals communicated to faculty, staff, and families? (A5)
4. When was the most recent review of mission, philosophy and goals (or objectives) completed? What groups were involved? (A6)
5. How does the school demonstrate its commitment to inclusiveness in cultural and gender diversity in the areas of governance and leadership, curriculum, support programs, staffing and activities? (A8)

### B: Educational Program, Activities, and Student Services

1. Attach a copy of the school's program description and/or curriculum guide. (Detailed course descriptions or scope/sequence analysis are not expected.) (B1)
2. Describe briefly how curriculum is developed, reviewed, and modified so as to ensure congruence with the school's mission and the needs of enrolled students. (B6)
3. Outline briefly how the school provides program support in the following areas: (Facilities, staff, program, etc. as appropriate.) (B12)
  - o Library/Media (B13)
  - o Technology
  - o Counseling or guidance (including college and/or vocational counseling, if applicable)(B8)
  - o Referral and other services for students with special needs (B8)
  - o Health services (B8)
4. What is the length of the school year and day? (B10)
5. If there is a residential program, describe briefly the facilities, staff, students, and special services involved. (B14)
6. List, without description, any special or supplementary programs offered by the school outside of the principal operation (summer sessions, before and after school care, special education, student exchanges, etc.) (B15)

### C. School Governance, Administration, Finance, & Law

1. Attach a copy of the school's charter, or articles of incorporation and the statement from IRS documenting 501(c)(3) status or equivalent, applicable evidence of Canadian or Mexican tax exempt status. Also, attach a copy of the school's by-laws. (C1)
2. Describe the school organization. Include responsibilities of the board, faculty, administration, and parents. (C3 & C4)
3. Briefly describe the school's program or process for evaluation of the performance of the following personnel: (C6)
  - o Board
  - o Teachers
  - o Administration
  - o Non-Teaching Personnel
4. Attach a copy of the school's official statement(s) of non-discriminatory practices with respect to admission of students and employment of faculty and staff. (C7)

5. Do your school's facilities and equipment meet applicable health, fire, safety, and sanitary standards? Provide proof of inspections and please note any significant exceptions. Describe briefly, or show a map of, plant and facilities owned by or available to the school. Please include such areas as library, laboratories, lavatories, studios, gymnasiums, etc. (C8)
6. When did the school last develop a strategic (or long range) plan? Please attach a copy if this was done within the last three years. (C10)
7. Also, attach a copy of the current year's budget and most recent financial statement. (C10)
8. What is the date of the most recently completed annual financial review or audit? If available, please attach a copy. (C12)

**D. Personnel**

1. Attach a list of faculty and staff showing colleges and universities, degrees earned, preparation for Waldorf teaching (when and where Waldorf Certificate was earned), and principal responsibilities in the school. (D1)
2. Describe briefly the school's program for faculty recruitment. (D2)
3. Attach a summary of faculty salaries such as range and median, list of salaries (without names), or a schedule, if applicable. What pension, insurance, and other benefits are offered? (D3)
4. Attach a copy of typical faculty contract or letter of employment agreement. (D4)
5. Describe the school's program for professional growth of the faculty and staff. (D5)

**E. Community of the School**

1. Describe the structure and functions of the parent organization, if applicable. (E1)
2. Attach a copy of the school's brochure. Describe briefly the school's admissions policies and procedures. Include how candidates for the school are evaluated. (E2)
3. Attach a copy of individual tuition contract, and/or enrollment agreement, and tuition schedule. (E4)

## Appendix B: Checklist for Self-Study Steering Committee/Coordinator

### In the year or months preceding the self-study:

- Schedule with the Accreditation Coordinator of AWSNA a preliminary visit to the school.
- See that the school and board review, revise (as necessary) and re-endorse the school's statements of mission, philosophy, and goals.
- See that the curriculum guides are revised and current, providing a succinct description of the "scope and sequence" of the program.
- Undertake a survey of all constituents (parents, board, and others as applicable and appropriate). (See Appendix J, L, M & N)
- Develop the structure to undertake the self-study, creating the appropriate committees necessary to address all the topics required to be studied in an AWSNA evaluation (see AWSNA Evaluation Guide for Self-Study); incorporate all the faculty and administration, as well as representatives from parents and trustees. A committee can be one person.
- Create a calendar for the self-study that includes all assignments and due dates and allowing for meeting time.

### In the year of the self-study:

- Decide on global questions, if any, to ask or themes to pursue across all committee lines.
- Ensure that all committees keep on track with their charge and schedule and that all committee reports follow the same 4-part format (overview, strengths, weaknesses, priorities) and parameters (no more than four or five items in each section, no more than three to five pages per committee/subcommittee report).
- Read all the results of the survey of constituents.
- Edit the committee reports to ensure consistency of style, tone, and format.
- Write the Conclusion section of the report, commenting on the process and on any general themes that may have emerged across committees.

### In the year of the visit:

- Arrange for a visit to the school by the visiting team leader to review facilities, progress on the self-study, and logistics (accommodations, schedule, computer/word-processing arrangements, etc.).
- Send a letter of acknowledgement from the school to each visiting team member enclosing the Biographical Data Sheet (Appendix D), once the team members have been selected by the AWSNA Office. (See sample letter, Appendix C)
- Send a mailing to all team members and to AWSNA (four to six weeks prior to the visit, that includes the following:
  - General information about the school (catalog, brochure, handbooks, etc.).
  - Travel directions, lodging information, and general visit logistics
  - Letter of welcome from the visiting team leader, with preliminary orientation outline from AWSNA (see Appendix E), the specific four-day visitation schedule (see Appendix G), assignments of areas of responsibility and request for draft of reports for these areas
  - Visiting Team roster, in finalized form, with information on team members' schools & areas of expertise.
- Mail the final self-study report: at least five weeks prior to the visit, the school duplicates the report and sends it to each member of the visiting team, one copy to each reader from the Accreditation Review Committee, and one hardcopy to the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator along with it in electronic format.
- Assemble all the materials required to be available for the visiting team in its conference room. (See Appendix F)



## Appendix C: Sample Letter to Acknowledge Visiting Team Members

Date  
Name  
School  
Address  
City, State, Zip

Dear Name:

The faculty and staff of our school have been busy conducting the AWSNA self-evaluation, a process critical to school improvement and to the septennial AWSNA accreditation procedure. We are now looking forward to welcoming the visiting team to the school for four days (Sunday- Wednesday afternoon, dates): Mrs. Jane Doe, Teacher at Mayberry Waldorf School, will be the visiting team leader. The AWSNA Accreditation Office has informed us that you are willing to serve as a visiting team member.

AWSNA indicates to us that its accreditation process is sustained by the volunteer spirit of our member schools; each of us is expected to contribute annually to the number of visiting team members needed by AWSNA. While it is our turn to ask you for your assistance now, we will be returning the favor by making our faculty and staff available to other schools as the cycle continues.

Thank you in advance for your participation on our behalf.  
Sincerely yours,

School Representative

SCHOOL NAME  
ENCL: AWSNA Visiting Team Information Sheet  
Information on School  
Introduction to Waldorf education (for non-Waldorf team members)



## Appendix D: Visiting Team Member Information Form

Date: Enter date here

Recipient's Name: Enter your name here

On behalf of AWSNA, thank you again for your willingness to serve on an AWSNA accreditation team by submitting the information requested below.

Your school address: Enter address here

Your school phone number: Enter # here

Your school fax number: Enter # here

Home address: Enter address here

Home phone: Enter # here

Home fax number: Enter # here

Email address: Enter address here

### Teaching experience includes:

Subject:

Enter subject here Grade Level Enter level here

Enter subject here Grade Level Enter level here

Enter subject here Grade Level Enter level here

Enter subject here Grade Level Enter level here

Enter subject here Grade Level Enter level here

Enter subject here Grade Level Enter level here

Enter subject here Grade Level Enter level here

### Administrative experience includes:

Enter experience here

Enter experience here

Enter experience here

Enter experience here

### Extracurricular experience includes:

Enter experience here

Enter experience here

Enter experience here

Enter experience here

### Years in education as a teacher or administrator:

Enter years here

As Waldorf educator: Enter years here

I have taken part in accreditation evaluation(s) of Enter # other schools.

Enter brief description here

I have laptop/notebook computer I will bring: Enter yes or no

Windows or Mac

I use Word, Pages or other for my word processing program.



Please highlight in ***bold/italics*** any of the teaching or administrative areas below for which you would feel comfortable and competent as an evaluator or as an assistant to a more experienced evaluator.

Governance	Elem. Language Arts	H.S. English
Finance	Elem. Mathematics	H.S. Mathematics
Development/Public Rel.	Elem. Computer	H.S. Computer
Admissions/Financial Aid	Elem. Social Studies	H.S. Humanities
Faculty Leadership	Elem. Science	H.S. History/SS
Curriculum Supervision	Elem. Foreign Language	H.S. Science
Preschool/kindergarten	Elem. Music	H. S. Foreign Language
Middle School/Elem.	Elem. Visual Arts	H. S. Practical Arts
Upper School	Eurythmy	H.S. Music
Discipline/Activities	Elem. Drama/Perf. Arts	H.S. Drama/Perf. Arts
Residential Programs	Elem. Physical Education	H.S. Athletics/Phys. Ed.
Plant/Facilities	Early Childhood	College Counseling
Counseling	Special Education	Gender/Diversity Issues
Religion	Library/Media	H.S. Fine Arts

The school will want to make sure your stay with them is as comfortable as possible. To this end, the following information would be helpful.

Favorite hot drink	Enter name here
Favorite cold drink	Enter name here
Favorite snack	Enter name here
Special diet	Enter restrictions here
Allergies	Enter name here

Many thanks for your cooperation in completing this form sheet **and returning it, as soon as possible, to:**

Arthur M. Pittis  
 AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator  
[apittis@awsna.org](mailto:apittis@awsna.org)

## **Appendix E: Sample Welcome Letter to Visiting Team Members from School**

Date (five weeks prior to visit)

Name

School

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear (Name of Visiting Team Member):

The faculty and staff of our school have been busy conducting the AWSNA self-evaluation, a process critical to school improvement and to the AWSNA accreditation procedure. Enclosed is the self-study so that you can read it prior to your coming to our campus. We are looking forward to welcoming the visiting team to the school for four days (Sunday-Wednesday afternoon, dates): A letter of welcome is also included herein from Mrs. Jane Doe, Head of St. Scholastic Prep, the visiting team leader. We appreciate your acceptance of the invitation from AWSNA to join our team and your willingness to contribute professionally in this important way.

We enclose as well various documents and materials addressing matters of logistics and orientation to our school and to the AWSNA evaluation process.

Looking forward to your visit with us, I am

Sincerely yours,

School Coordinator for Accreditation (Chair, Steering Committee)

Enclosures:

1. Letter of welcome from the visiting team leader
2. Visiting team roster, with info on team members' schools, areas of expertise, and team assignment areas
3. General information about the school (catalog, brochure, handbooks, etc.).
4. Travel directions, lodging information, and general visit logistics
5. Four-day visitation schedule (Appendix G)



## Appendix F: Checklist of Items to be Available During the Visit

*(Please attach a checked copy of this checklist as the first page of the Addenda)*

- ☐ School statements of mission, philosophy and objectives, with evidence of most recent board / faculty approval.
- ☐ School admissions catalog's statements on admissions policies and procedures (including any references to financial aid).
- ☐ Official school statement on nondiscriminatory admissions and employment practices
- ☐ School's official documents and catalog statements to parents regarding their financial obligations upon enrolling a child in the school, including an enrollment contract.
- ☐ Summary of the recent three years' school statistics (including the current year, if available), as submitted to AWSNA (from AWSNA Financial Survey). It is permissible to provide either copies of each year's forms--minus the page reporting specific salaries--or to provide a summary compilation for three years' statistics).
- ☐ Faculty / administrative directory that lists each faculty and administration member, indicating colleges and degrees, major fields of study, Waldorf teacher training, course-load, student load, number of preparations, administrative responsibilities, extracurricular responsibilities, years of teaching experience, years with the school, professional memberships / affiliations, and professional development activities over the last three years.
- ☐ Copy of the school's academic profile, with graduation requirements.
- ☐ Copy of the daily schedule and the yearly calendar.
- ☐ Photocopy of the school's IRS 501(c)(3) letter or its Canadian or Mexican equivalent proof of tax-exempt, non-profit status.
- ☐ School's admissions and financial aid packet.
- ☐ Sample faculty hiring letter / contract.
- ☐ Summary of employee benefits.
- ☐ Faculty handbook with school policies or statements on faculty professional growth and development.
- ☐ Faculty evaluation procedures / instrument.
- ☐ Curriculum guides for each class or subject area offered. (See Appendix H)
- ☐ Sample student reports and permanent records.
- ☐ Wall chart, showing the names and schedules of all staff and faculty, with space to indicate which staff members and faculty the team has visited during the four days
- ☐ School handbooks that present information and guidelines of the school
- ☐ Copy of the school by-laws
- ☐ Alumni office publications, student publications, etc.
- ☐ List of Trustees, designating officers, parents, and teachers
- ☐ Current year's operating budget and the full opinion audit for the preceding year
- ☐ Copy of most recent long-range (strategic) plan for the school.
- ☐ Documentation that facilities and personnel conform to local and state public safety and health regulations.

- ☐ Board/ school policies for federally mandated matters (Family Leave Act, ADA, Blood- borne Pathogens, EPA requirements for asbestos, lead, radon, etc.).
- ☐ Summary of school survey of parents.
- ☐ Report on alumni (summary of any test results, school/ college placements, record of achievement at next level of schooling, etc.)
- ☐ Copy of last school self-study, the AWSNA visiting team report, and the school's follow-up Progress Report, if applicable.
- ☐ Binders for each of the following:
  - ☐ Samples of any forms the school uses
  - ☐ Samples of a year's events and outreach activities (flyers, PR articles, etc.)
  - ☐ Board of Trustees' minutes
  - ☐ Faculty meeting minutes
  - ☐ College meeting minutes

## Appendix G: Sample 4-Day AWSNA Visiting Team Schedule

The AWSNA visiting team schedule for the evaluation visit will vary with the school, its size, and its program; it will, typically, span a four-day period as follows:

### First Day - Arrival and Orientation of the Visiting Team

12:00 p.m.	Arrival of team, check-in at place of lodging
2:00 p.m.	Brief preliminary meeting of the visiting team
3:00-4:30 p.m.	Tour of the campus
4:30 p.m.	Informal social hour for school community including administration, faculty, board, parents, and visiting team
5:30 p.m.	Supper for visiting team, school leaders, and in-house accreditation coordinators
7:00-10:00 p.m.	Organization, orientation, and planning meeting of the visiting team

### Second & Third Days - Visits and Meetings

7:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00-12:00 Noon	Visits to classes, talks with faculty, etc.
12:00 Noon	Lunch at school, informal talks with faculty and students
1:00 P.M.	Visits to classes, activities, athletics, etc.
3:30 p.m.	Meetings with special groups such as trustees, parent leaders, alumni representatives, faculty committees, departments, etc.
5:30 p.m.	Supper (for visiting team alone)
7:00 p.m.	Evening meeting of visiting team as a whole - discussion, examination of exhibits, preparation of reports, visiting team review of reports

### Final Day - Reporting

7:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00 a.m.	Final visits, or re-visits, with emphasis on areas with questions or those not covered earlier
1 1:00 a.m.	Meeting of visiting team - final review of subcommittee reports, agreement on major findings and recommendation on accreditation
12:00 Noon	Lunch
2:00 p.m.	Exit interview with the school representative(s) and visiting team leader and assistant chair, sharing of major findings
3:30 p.m.	Oral exit report of major findings to faculty, administration, and trustees, by the visiting team leader and team members



## **Appendix H: Possible Report Areas/Subcommittees, Program Section of Self-Study**

### School Divisions

- Pre-School/Kindergarten
- Lower School
- Middle School
- Upper School

### Academic Disciplines

- English/Language Arts
- Fine and Applied Arts
- Foreign Languages/Ancient Languages
- Health and Physical Education
- Movement (Eurythmy, etc.)
- History and Social Studies
- Language Arts/Reading
- Mathematics
- Science
- Special Skills Courses (Remedial, Typing, Public Speaking. etc.)
- Assessment Program

### School Life

- Arts Programs
- Athletic Programs
- Counseling and Guidance Programs
- Extracurricular Activities and Organizations
- Student Government
- Honor and Discipline Systems
- Religious Life
- Residential Life (Dormitory Life, Weekend Activities, School Supervision)
- Day Student Life
- Special Programs (ESL, Jobs Program, Summer School, Term Abroad, Mini-mester, Career Experiences, After-school Activities, Extended Day, etc.)

### Student Services

- Remedial Therapy
- Community Resources
- Food Service
- Guidance/Counseling
- Health Care
- Library/Media Center
- Records
- Transportation





## Appendix J: Data for Individual Faculty Member

(One copy to be filled out by each teacher and used for school profile.)

This form should be filled out by each member of the school's faculty in the same year as the evaluation visit. The completed forms should be collected by the self-study coordinator, and one or more sets should be available for use by the evaluation team during the visit itself.

Name: Enter your name

Date: Enter date

### I. Weekly schedule in outline: (Representative of schedule at the time of the visit)

Please include in parentheses on your schedule the number of pupils in each class.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>

*Extra-curricular activities*

--	--	--	--	--	--

*Note directly above subjects taught, extra-curricular responsibilities and other duties assigned to you during other periods of the school year that are not indicated in the class schedule above.*

Other activities: Enter description here of what and when

### II. Academic Preparation:

<i>Name of College(s)</i>	<i>Dates Attended</i>	<i>Degree and Date Rec'd</i>	<i>Major Field of Study</i>	<i>Minor of Study Field</i>

### III. Preparation for Waldorf Teaching:

<i>Name of Institute(s)</i>	<i>Dates Attended</i>	<i>Field or discipline of studies</i>	<i>Additional studies</i>

**IV. Teaching Experience:**

<i>School</i>	<i>Subject(s) Taught</i>	<i>Grade Levels</i>	<i>Dates</i>

**V. Professional Experience in the last 5 years:**

(Membership in professional organizations, professional development activity, attendance at educational meetings and conferences, etc. Use separate sheet if necessary.)

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Focus/activity</i>	<i>Dates</i>

**VI. Non-School Experience in the last 5 years:**

(Hobbies, camp or playground work, travel, general and professional reading, other interests, etc.)

<i>Activity</i>

## Appendix K: Information on Faculty Experience and Salaries

(To be completed by the school)

This information should be made available to at least the leader of the visiting team during the visit. If this information is considered confidential by the school, the form should be completed by the appropriate person in the school. This form does not need to be used if equivalent information is available in some other form.

<i>Total Years of Waldorf School Experience</i>	<i>Number of Male Full- time</i>	<i>Number of Female Full- time</i>	<i>Number of Male Part- time</i>	<i>Number of Female Part- time</i>	<i>Average Salary</i>
1,2,3					
4,5,6					
7,8,9					
10,11,12					
13,14,15					
16,17,18					
19,20,21					
22,23,24					
25 or more					

Indicate current salary scale below, attaching a copy to this sheet.

Minimum Full-time Salary	Maximum Full-time Salary	Yearly increment value

Merit raises: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If given, describe how merit raises are given:

Please enter description

Salary Scale: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If there is a faculty salary scale for full-time members, please indicate the means for determining:

Please enter description

When housing and/or other perquisites enter into a teacher's remuneration, these should be included after the recorded salary. Cash salary should be listed first; then a "+", followed by equivalent \$ value of perquisites. Administrators who teach should be considered part-time, and just the teaching portion of their salaries listed. Note any special considerations or situations below:

Please enter description



## Appendix L: Information on Non-Teaching Personnel and Salaries

This information should be made available to at least the leader of the visiting team during the visit. If the school considers this information confidential, the appropriate person in the school should complete the form. Since some of this information is usually confidential, it is sufficient to share it with the Leader of the Visiting Team.

[illegible]

\*FTE - Indicate proportion of time spent on duties, separate from teaching or other duties.

Please describe the cultural mixture of staff.

Please enter description

**\*\*When housing and/or other perquisites enter into non-teaching personnel's remuneration, these should be included after the recorded salary. Cash salary should be listed first; than a '+', followed by equivalent \$ value or perquisites. Staff who teach should be considered part-time, and just the teaching portion of their salaries listed. Note any special considerations or situations below:**

Please enter description

## Appendix M: Board Member Evaluation Form

This document was developed to provide one means of trustee self-assessment. Some schools have found it worthwhile to ask each member of the Board to complete this form and to ask one member of the Board to compile and summarize the findings that then become part of the self-study.

This form, designed to assist board members in appraising their effectiveness in school life, is available for use at any time. It is strongly urged, however, that at least every seven years, the Trustees complete this exercise in the same spirit as that in which the school is conducting its own self-evaluation.

### I. Self-evaluation:

*Please rate yourself, on a scale of 1 - 4 (one being the lowest) in each of the following areas:*

- a) Personal knowledge of school? Enter self-rating here
- b) Personal interest in school? Enter self-rating here
- c) Knowledge of school personnel? Enter self-rating here
- d) Degree of activity on Board? Enter self-rating here
- e) Degree of activity on Committees? Enter self-rating here
- f) Attendance at Board meetings? Enter self-rating here
- g) Attendance at School activities? Enter self-rating here
- h) Degree of effectiveness in fund-raising? Enter self-rating here
- i) Effectiveness as promoter of School in community? Enter self-rating here
- j) Degree of concern re: learning about current educational practices and procedures? Enter self-rating here
- k) Knowledge of and interest in financial operations of the School? Enter self-rating here
- l) Assessment of own contribution to Board? Enter self-rating here

If you rated yourself "1" or "2" on any of the above, please copy down the letter of that section and explain briefly the reasoning for that rating:

Please enter description

### II. Questions for Personal Consideration:

*Briefly comment on each of the following:*

- a) Judging from your own experience, do you feel that the Board's practice of information, explanation, and orientation for new members is adequate: If not, what changes would you make?  
Please enter description
- b) Are you satisfied with the Decision-Making Process of the Board? If not, what changes would you make?  
Please enter description
- c) Do you feel that the philosophy and purposes of the school are sound and well developed? If not, what changes would you make?



Please enter description

- d) What do you feel are the greatest strengths of the Board? Its chief weaknesses?

Please enter description

- e) What do you feel have been your greatest contributions to the Board?

Please enter description

- f) Are you satisfied with the Board's policy of dealing with members who have rotated off the Board? Are ex-members adequately informed of School affairs? Are ex-members kept involved, in some way, with the School? Can you think of a way in which they might more effectively be utilized for the good of the School?

Please enter description

- g) Are the lines of responsibility for Board and School clearly delineated and followed?

Please enter description

- h) Do you feel that communication among Board members, and between Board and School, is satisfactory: If not, how might it be improved?

Please enter description

- i) Are Board members discreet and careful in their handling of complaints that may possibly come to them from constituents?

Please enter description

- j) Are there any ways in which you think the Board might be doing a more effective job, based on your understanding of Board purposes and structure?

Please enter description

## Appendix N: Parent Survey

It is suggested that the following questions be circulated to all parents and that the responses be summarized in writing for the Visiting Team. Please use space on additional paper to complete answers, if necessary. INDICATE CHILD'S GRADE.

1. To what extent did your child's admissions interview and other communication with the school clarify your expectations? Comment on the general atmosphere of the interview.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Describe any efforts made to supply information and to orient you during your first year as a parent at the school.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Whom do you contact at the school for information and help? How do you know whom to contact? Are you able to get all the information you want?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. How are the arrangements made for conferring with your child's teacher? How clear and helpful are reports and conferences? If follow-up is necessary, are you satisfied with the process?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. How clear is financial information? Does school have a contract between school and parent/guardian regarding financial obligations? What questions do you have about the financing of the school?
6. Does the school seem to cultivate financial support through development, obtain referrals for potential students, seek parental assistance for school activities and projects, and provide parent education?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Does the school's educational program meet your expectations? Make recommendations for strengthening and continuing development.

8. Do you feel the homework assigned in your child's grade(s) is appropriate in content, quality and type? (Indicate grade level.)

9. What thoughts do you have on the school's discipline policy and practices?

10. Do you have any questions about the school building?

11. What things do you particularly like about the school? What things would you change?

## Appendix O: Information & Suggestions for Members of Visiting Teams

*(To Be Mailed to Visiting Team Members by the Accreditation Coordinator & Reviewed at Initial Team Meeting)*

Members of AWSNA Visiting Teams:

On behalf of AWSNA, I would like to express our most sincere thanks to you for your willingness to serve on a visiting team. In doing so, you are providing a vitally important service to both the Association and the school that you will visit. Evaluation is a complex and sophisticated process, but it is also an exciting, stimulating professional experience for all that are involved.

What we expect you to bring to this process are your broad experience in education, your knowledge and expertise in your field, your professional insights, your objectivity, your ability to take the perspective of others, your ability to differentiate between important and minor issues, your common sense, and your ability to write clearly and concisely.

While you can expect to receive a thorough briefing on your specific responsibilities from the chair of your visiting team at the beginning of the evaluation visit, the following information and suggestions are being sent now to help you understand your role as an evaluator, and how you can best serve AWSNA and the school.

**Purpose of the Evaluation Visit:** The process is designed to achieve the dual purpose of accountability and school improvement. In both instances, it is essential to maintain the integrity of the process. Before you arrive on campus, the school you will visit will have completed an intensive self-study of all its components. The purpose of the visiting team is to add the objective, professional view of people outside the school to the evaluation process. You will be primarily concerned with reviewing and validating, or questioning, the school's own findings, but you will also be asked to help determine what, if anything, the school may have overlooked in the course of its self-study. Your specific tasks will be the following:

- To review the data and materials prepared by the school
- To observe the school in full operation to ascertain the degree to which the actual situation coincides with that reported by the school
- To seek, collect, and interpret data necessary to reach conclusions concerning the effectiveness of the school and its programs
- To prepare a written report summarizing an area and listing both commendations and recommendations for the part of the school which you have been assigned. **It is very important that you draft your report before arriving on campus.** This decreases the intensity of the work on site, for you will be editing instead of writing from scratch.

**Your tripartite role:** Adding to the complexities, and importance, of the evaluation visit is your need to balance three different roles you will have to fill as an evaluator:

1. You have been invited to serve by the school; you are, therefore, a guest of the school, and you owe it all the professional courtesy and empathy you can muster.

2. You are also a representative of AWSNA, the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, and are on a fact-finding mission for the Association.
3. You are also a member of a team, which will report, as a whole, to both AWSNA and the host school. Your individual observation, assessment, and ideas are critical to the process, but what ends up in the formal report is limited to what the team can agree upon.

What you will receive in advance of the Evaluation Visit: You will receive several communications from the school and/or the Chair of the Visiting Team including:

- General information about the school, brochures, catalogues, etc.
- Specific information related to the evaluation such as the school's statement of philosophy and goals, student and faculty census data, and other factual information.
- Logistic information on the visit such as transportation, housing, schedules, etc.
- The school's self-study report, with an indication of which sections you will be primarily involved in reviewing.

**Expenses:** The school being evaluated will cover your travel, lodging, and meal expenses; an itemized account should be turned in to the school before you leave. (Team members are responsible for their own personal expenses such as any long distance phone calls and personal services.) If you are asked to make your own airplane arrangements, please try to utilize the most economical airfares available. It is official AWSNA policy that no honoraria are to be paid to any members of the visiting team.

**General Exhortations:**

- It is of utmost importance to remember, as every judgment is made, to evaluate the school and its operation in the light of its own philosophy - and not yours. Nothing can undermine the credibility of an evaluation more rapidly than comments such as "At our school, we do this...."
- It is the overall quality of the school's effectiveness that is most important; your emphasis must be on the major factors affecting the school, not minuscule defects.
- You must constantly be alert to your professional conduct, both during and after the visit. You must not talk in your community about your recent visit, or about the school or its personnel, especially in derogatory ways.
- When visiting classes, be as unobtrusive as possible; do not take notes in the classroom and do not interrupt the normal flow of class procedure. In conversations with faculty, you should strive to create an atmosphere of understanding and mutual trust so that the school staff members will be able to explain what they are doing, rather than feeling that they have to defend it.
- Except for an initial social gathering with the host school's administration and faculty, do not expect any social activities. Evenings will be required for meetings of the team as a whole and for preparation of reports.
- Avoid premature judgment, especially on the first days of the visit. Try to keep your eyes, ears, and mind open until observations begin to fall into a pattern. When you begin to form conclusions, be sure to test them against specific observations, data, and documentation provided by the school.
- You should never make criticisms or suggestions directly to members of the school staff. All findings should result from team discussion and action.

- You are not evaluating the performance of individual teachers, administrators, or staff members. In making classroom visits, you are observing teaching techniques, use of educational materials, and the outcomes of classroom procedures on an aggregate basis.
- Your visiting team is not approving or censuring the school being examined. You are, however, collecting data and reaching findings that will be submitted to the AWSNA Accreditation Review Committee and the delegates on the basis of which their decision will be reached.
- Always remember that the visiting team's discussions and findings are confidential in nature and must not be aired in public or private conversation after the visit.

We sincerely hope that you will find your experience as an evaluator rewarding, both professionally and personally. Please do not hesitate to call the Visiting Team Leader or the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator, if you have questions about the evaluation program or your part in it.

AWSNA and all its member schools are appreciative of the wisdom, insight, and energy you will bring to the task.

Accreditation Coordinator for AWSNA



## Appendix P: Checklist for the Visiting Team Leader

### A. Once Accepting an Invitation to Serve:

- Review the AWSNA Evaluation/ Accreditation Guide, all sections.
- Obtain a general idea of the school's mission, type, and philosophy
- Reach mutual agreement with the school on dates for the preliminary visit.
- If a dual evaluation, understand your relationship to the other accrediting body. (See Appendix X.)

### B. Preliminary Visit of the Visiting Team Leader to the School (mandatory):

- Obtain complete familiarity with the school (campus, governance, administration, programs, etc.).
- Review or make logistic decisions (transportation, lodging, meals, computers, secretarial help).
- Finalize schedule for the visitation, including special meetings with board representatives, parent leaders, student leaders, staff, etc.
- Remind school that the visit days should be regular days with no classes on trips, no plays, etc.
- Assure that a variety of main lesson subjects need to be available during visit.
- Check on self-study with respect to coverage and completeness: Note that for schools with multiple campuses, one unified report is required in the general areas of the self-study and the visiting team report (i.e., Philosophy; Program, Governance, Personnel, School Community Governance), although separate program sections for the separate campuses or divisions of the school are fine.
- Meet with faculty, administration, and staff to review plans for the visit and to provide a brief reminder of the nature and philosophy of an AWSNA evaluation (i.e., evaluation based on the congruence to the school's own mission and meeting the AWSNA Shared Principles).
- Meet with the board chair or other trustees to ensure that the board has been involved in the self-study and that board representatives will meet with designated evaluators during the visit.
- Learn the school's expectations for the oral exit report (time, audience, format, content, etc.).
- Make preliminary assignments for the visiting team to ensure adequacy of coverage of topic areas and of class visits to all teachers.

### ii) Before the Visit:

- Review backgrounds and experience of visiting team members to check team assignments; identify new or inexperienced evaluators who may require special or additional orientation.)
- Coordinate with the school's Self-Study Coordinator for a single mailing from the school five weeks prior to the visit. The visiting team leader's welcome letter and team roster is part of a package sent from the school that also includes the following: a letter of welcome from the school; general information about the school brochures, catalog, handbooks, etc.); travel directions, lodging information, and general visit logistics; the specific four-day visitation schedule (See Appendix G); the *AWSNA Shared Principles*; and a copy of the section(s) of the AWSNA Self-Study Guide for which the person is responsible.
- Complete the organization of the visiting team - assignment of responsibilities, cluster groups, etc.
- Have handouts prepared for the team - schedule, orientation information, writing of reports, etc.

### iii) During the Visit

#### First Day of the Visit

- Conduct, upon arrival, a final review of schedule and logistics with school representatives.



- Communicate with Self-Study Steering Committee coordinator concerning additional group meetings that need to be scheduled.
- Hold a brief preliminary meeting with entire team before it meets school representatives (and perhaps a special orientation session for inexperienced evaluators).
- Accompany team on tour of the campus, led by older students or member of faculty.
- At reception introduce members of the visiting team and invite a school representative to describe the school's mission and philosophy and any unique elements of the program at the following dinner. Conduct a thorough orientation for entire team: See Information and Suggestions for Visiting Team Members in Appendix O.
- Discuss the host school's philosophy and goals.
- Remind the team that at all times a school is judged in terms of its disclosure of and congruence to its own mission and philosophy, not its adherence (or lack thereof) to any preconceived notions or professional preferences individual members of the visiting team may bring to the school.
- Identify areas for which preliminary reports will be given at the next evening session.
- Determine groups for which special meetings need to be arranged (unless already done).
- Identify a team member who will assist with editing of reports.
- Review the format for writing the individual reports

**Second Day of the Visit:**

- Lead the group meetings with trustees and key parents that should occur on this day.
- Check with the school to assess the level of comfort with the evaluation so far.
- Post a wall chart, listing all administrators and faculty, to indicate those who have been visited.
- Chair the evening session for the visiting team:
  - brainstorm impressions
  - develop list of emerging issues
  - boost team morale, if necessary (typically a dip as some negatives about the school being visited may emerge)
  - review writing format and emphasize the nature of a good AWSNA visiting team recommendation: one that is specific, terse, targeted, achievable
  - monitor presentation of reports for areas targeted for this evening (often Philosophy & Goals, School & Community, Business, Development, Admissions, Library/media)
- Review schedule for the third day to ensure that all special group meetings and all faculty visits have been completed by the end of the upcoming day.

**Third Day of the Visit:**

- Review the schedule of the day.
- Chair the evening session for the team:
  - Complete the sharing of reports for areas not covered the night before
  - Identify major commendations and recommendations
  - Develop the team's recommendation to AWSNA concerning accreditation (sometimes completed on the final morning of the visit if there are complexities): vote for full accreditation, not to accredit, or accreditation with conditions: identify, in the latter two cases, what *AWSNA Shared Principles*, specifically, the school fell short on meeting. If it appears the accreditation recommendation will be something less than full accreditation, call the Accreditation Coordinator of AWSNA to consult on the matter.

**Note: the recommendation to AWSNA must remain confidential and it is not to be shared with anyone at the school**

- Refer to the wall chart and identify any faculty who need to be seen on the final morning to ensure complete coverage.

**Fourth (Final) Day of the Visit:**

- Ensure that the team has all necessary information concerning reimbursement of expenses and plans for departure.
- Distribute visiting team leader evaluation forms to all team members, requesting submission to AWSNA.
- Distribute and collect expense forms from team members. Submit to school for reimbursement.
- Conduct final meeting of the team to formalize the content of the oral exit report and the wording of the major commendations and recommendations. The oral exit report should include various acknowledgments, reminders of the next steps with respect to accreditation and follow-up, and a summary of the major findings.
- Be sure that all evaluators have submitted reports to team leader or designated editor before departure.
- Meet with the school representative to share principal findings before the oral exit report.
- Deliver the exit report to the assembled multitudes: warm & collegial in tone (not pedantic or funereal), but straightforward, with no question and answer period, followed by the team's immediate departure.

## Recommended Format & Style for Visiting Team Reports

The visiting team report begins with an overview, followed by commendations and recommendations, executed according to the following format:

Overview: a general appraisal of one or two paragraphs, describing the program as it currently operates and the extent to which it functions effectively and manifests the stated mission of the school.

Commendations: a list of up to four or five items worthy of note as unusually strong aspects of the program. (Avoid any specific references to individuals.). Use a lead-in clause, with bullet points all in parallel grammatical form: e.g.,

The AWSNA visiting team commends the school for its...

(1) Development of....

(2) Decision to.... (Etc.)

Recommendations: a list of up to four or five items, prioritized, that address perceived weaknesses or challenges. (Avoid any specific references to individuals.) Use a lead-in clause, with bullet points all in parallel grammatical form: e.g.,

The AWSNA visiting team recommends that the school...

(1) Consider....

(2) Develop.... (Etc.)

## Preparation of the Visiting Team Report:

- Edit all sections of the report; check for uniformity of format, grammar, diction, tone, and clarity. (Some visiting team leaders choose to stay at the school the evening of the fourth day to complete the editing of the report before returning to their own schools and being diverted by all the catch up work on the home front.)
- Write a short introduction (brief history of the school, noting any recent major changes) and a short conclusion (summing up the spirit of the experience of the visit and the sense of the school at this juncture).
- Send, within two weeks of the visit, an edited draft to any member of the visiting team, for whom extensive editing was required, requesting approval and to return to you within five days.

- Send within two weeks of visit, a courtesy copy of edited draft to the school; ask for corrections concerning factual information only.
- Prepare final draft of visiting team report including all the required components (Attach checklist on next page as cover sheet for report)
- Mail, within four weeks of the visit, two copies of the final draft to the school, one hard copy and an electronic version (either as an e-mail attachment or on a disk) to the AWSNA Accreditation Office, and if a dual evaluation is involved, copies as requested by the other accrediting body. Attach a separate letter to the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator containing the recommendation of the visiting team concerning the accreditation level.

**Final Responsibilities:**

- Send thank you notes to all members of the visiting team.
- Send to the AWSNA Accreditation Office, a copy of the visiting team roster on which you have placed a rating score, 1-5 (1= poor, 5 = excellent) next to name of each team member: determine the rating for each team member on the basis of that member's overall knowledge, quality of written work, observation skills, initiative, rapport with school and other team members, and general sensitivity. (See form in Appendix U.)

## Appendix P1: Expense Form

**Name**  
**Address**

**Phone:**  
**E-Mail:**

Please itemize and attach receipts.

Transportation:

Airfare

Automobile (number of miles)

Other

Meals

Lodging

TOTAL

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_

You are responsible for your own personal expenses such as any long distance phone calls and personal services.



## Appendix Q: Cover Sheet for Visiting Team Leader

Attach a separate letter to the AWSNA report copy only, containing the recommendation of the visiting team concerning accreditation. The recommendation on accreditation is not to be shared with the school, either orally or in writing.

- ☐ 1. Title Page
- ☐ 2. Table of Contents (with page numbers for the report sections)
- ☐ 3. Disclaimer Sheet (See Appendix S)
- ☐ 4. The School Profile form (Appendix R)
- ☐ 5. AWSNA Visiting Team Roster (noting each team member's name, home school, title and areas of responsibility for visit).
- ☐ 6. The school's Mission/Philosophy Statement
- ☐ 7. Visiting Team Leader's Introduction, with Brief History of the School
- ☐ 8. Body of the report--Make certain the following visiting team reports are included:
  - ☐ Purpose, Goals, and Philosophy
  - ☐ Program, Activities, and Student Services
    - ☐ a) Curriculum and Overall Program
    - ☐ b) Student Services - counseling, guidance, health services, referral services, school and college placement, etc.
    - ☐ c) Other required areas - if applicable: residential life, early childhood programs, religious programs, special education and instruction, special programs (such as summer sessions, school programs, institutes, etc.), and volunteer/service programs
  - ☐ Governance and Administration
    - ☐ a) Governance and Decision-Making
    - ☐ b) Business and Financial Management
    - ☐ c) School Facilities - to include buildings, grounds, food service, equipment, maintenance, transportation and evidence of compliance with health and safety regulations.
  - ☐ Personnel - Administration, Faculty and Staff
  - ☐ Community of the School
    - ☐ a) Admissions Policies and Procedures, Financial Aid, Student Demographics
    - ☐ b) Alumni Relations/Development/PR
    - ☐ c) Parents Organization and Programs
    - ☐ d) The Local Community
    - ☐ e) School Climate and Morale - factors contributing to the learning and social environment.
    - ☐ f) Gender and Diversity
- ☐ 9. List of Major Commendations and Major Recommendations
- ☐ 10. Conclusion: Brief summary statement written by the visiting team leader



## Appendix R: School Profile Form

Background Data for the Visiting Team and the AWSNA Accreditation Review Committee (*to be completed by the School*).

### 1. SCHOOL DATA:

School Name: Enter name

Address: Enter physical address

Type of community: ☐ Urban ☐ Suburban ☐ Rural

Type of School: ☐ boys ☐ girls ☐ coed ☐ boarding ☐ day ☐ day & boarding

Date School Founded: Enter date      Date School Incorporated not for profit: Enter date

Name of School Contact: Enter name      Title: Enter name

Date of Appointment:

Date of previous accreditation of the school: Enter date

Other agencies by which the school is accredited: Enter name

Range of Tuition: \$ Enter amount to \$ Enter amount

Range of Salary Scale: \$ Enter amount to \$ Enter amount

Date of most recent Full Opinion financial audit: Enter date

Date of most recent Long Range Planning Process: Enter date

### 2. STUDENT BODY

Enrollment includes which grades? Enter number through Enter number

Please give the appropriate number for each of the following categories:

Total Enrollment:	Boys:		Girls:	
Pre-School:	Boys:		Girls:	
Elementary:	Boys:		Girls:	
Secondary:	Boys:		Girls:	
Postgraduate:	Boys:		Girls:	
Boarding:	Boys:		Girls:	

Foreign Exchange Students: (Indicate countries and numbers)

Insert description here.

Describe the cultural/ethnic mixture of the student body.

Insert description here.

### 3. TEACHING FACULTY:



Please give the appropriate number for each of the following categories: (Exclude those, or the appropriate portion of those, with administrative duties.)

	<i>Full-time:</i>	<i>Part-time:</i>	<i>Full-time Equivalent</i>
Male:			
Female:			

#### Academic Training of Teaching Faculty

Number who have not earned B.A. or B.S degree:	
Number who have earned bachelor's degree only:	
Number who have earned master's degree:	
Number who have earned other degrees or equivalents (such as eurythmy diploma):	
(Please specify)	
Number who have Waldorf teacher training certificates:	
(Please specify)	

#### **4. SCHOOL ORGANIZATION - GOVERNANCE & ADMINISTRATION**

##### Board of Trustees

Total no.: Enter number Men: Enter number Women: Enter number Minority: Enter number

Term of Office: Enter number

How chosen:

Insert description here.

Please list the principal Board Committees.

Enter text here

*If preferable, attach printed material outlining any of this information.*

Administrative Structure: List titles of administrative officers: Administrator, Coordinator, Business Manager, Secretary, Receptionist, Development Coordinator, Admissions, etc. If the principal responsibilities are not obvious from the title, please explain what they are. Again, if preferable, attach printed material outlining this information.

#### **5. GRADUATES**

*Please give the following information for each of the last three years:*

Total number of graduates if highest grade is 8<sup>th</sup>:

One year ago: Enter number

Two years ago: Enter number

Three years ago: Enter number

Attending Secondary School:

Total number of graduates if highest grade is 12<sup>th</sup>:

One year ago: Enter number

Two years ago: Enter number

Three years ago: Enter number

Attending Four-year College: Enter number

Attending Junior College: Enter number

Other: (specify): Enter number

## **6. SELF-STUDY**

Perceived Major Strengths as a total institution: (attach)

Enter text here

Perceived Major Weaknesses as a total institution: (attach)

Enter text here

Name of Person completing this form:

Enter name



## **Appendix S: Disclaimer: Limitations on the Distribution, Use and Scope of this Document**

It is the policy of AWSNA that this report be treated as a privileged document. Copies have been submitted to AWSNA (and the co-accrediting organization where applicable), and copies have been sent to the school. Beyond this distribution, no one - including the visiting team leader and other members of the visiting team, the Accreditation Review Committee, and AWSNA - is authorized to release any of the information contained in this report without the express approval of the school.

This report is intended for use by the school. Appropriate use includes release to the larger school community, if done so in an accurate and balanced manner. The report is not written for the purpose of providing a public relations document. If a school uses the report in a manner that misrepresents or distorts its contents or purpose, the school will be subject to corrective action by AWSNA.

The charge of the AWSNA visiting team was to determine the actual situation as it existed in the school, its program and its procedures, and not to pass judgment on the professional personnel involved. Hence, this report is an objective description of circumstances as they appeared to trained and experienced educators. Any use of this report as an official assessment of a staff person's professional competency would be in violation of the professional ethics under which a school evaluation is conducted.

Any recommendations on safety issues should be addressed as soon as is feasible: While the AWSNA team may comment on conditions related to safety, the report is not to be construed as substituting for periodic inspections of the facilities as required by law and by principles of good practice in risk management gleaned from professional counsel to the school.

The members of the visiting team voluntarily reflected their professional judgment in arriving at the conclusions reported in this document. They are willing to support the thoughtful evaluations that they have made, provided the report is used appropriately. They are not to be held accountable for an injudicious or unauthorized use of this document.



## Appendix T: Confidential Rating Sheet of Visiting Team Leader

*(To be completed by each visiting team member and mailed directly to AWSNA)*

Name of Visiting Team Chair: Enter name

Name of School Visited: Enter name

Dates of Visit: Enter date

1. In order to assist the AWSNA Accreditation Office in assessing the visiting team leader, as well as to assist each leader in strengthening and improving his or her effectiveness as the leader of a team, we ask that you complete the following form as honestly and as thoughtfully as possible. When it has been finished, please mail it to the AWSNA Accreditation Office. Thank you.
2. Specific areas for rating: (Please use a scale of 1 through 5, in which 1 denotes Poor and 5 represents Excellent with gradations between.)
 

a) Adequacy of communication before visit:	Enter rating
b) Evidence of preliminary planning:	Enter rating
c) Evidence of preliminary knowledge of school:	Enter rating
d) Organization of visitation schedule and coverage:	Enter rating
e) Leadership and guidance of team:	Enter rating
f) Perceptiveness in locating and dealing with problems:	Enter rating
g) Patience, humor, rapport, cohesiveness:	Enter rating
h) Ability to direct meetings and assimilate information:	Enter rating
i) Ability to write, summarize, articulate findings:	Enter rating
j) Any other personal comments you would care to add:	Enter rating

If you would like to sign this, you may do so. It is not necessary, however.  
Signature (not mandatory)



## Appendix U: Confidential Rating Sheet of Visiting Team Members

*(To be completed by each visiting team leader and mailed directly to the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator)*

Name of Visiting Team Chair: Enter name

Name of School Visited: Enter name

Dates of Visit: Enter date

### INSTRUCTIONS TO THE VISITING TEAM LEADER:

Please attach to this cover form and mail to the AWSNA Accreditation Office a roster of the visiting team on which you have placed a rating score, 1-5 (1 = poor, 5 = excellent) next to the name of each team member.

Determine the rating for each team member on the basis of that member's overall knowledge, quality of written work, observation skills, initiative, rapport with school and other team members, and general sensitivity. Please feel free to add comments, as appropriate.

Name	Rating
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

Also, if there are one or two members of the visiting team whom you find to be such exceptional contributors that you would wish to recommend them to serve as a Visiting Team Leader, please indicate below:

Name	Areas of Expertise	Team Member's School
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		





## Appendix V: Team Leader Checklist -- Initial Visit

### Elements of the Self-Study Document

**A)** Check the Self-Study Document for

1. Purpose, Goals, Philosophy
2. Educational Program, Activities and Student Services
3. Governance, Administration, Finance and Law
4. Personnel
5. Community of the School

**B)** Look for **Disclosure**. (Team leader begins to develop questions to check for **Congruence**.)

**C)** Since the key to successful Waldorf education lies in the relationship between teacher and child, the school has the responsibility to create forms and procedures that support the teacher in this process. Look for ways the school supports

- ☐ A keen interest in and study of each child in the teacher's care;
- ☐ An on-going study of human development, especially as it relates to a teacher's specific classes;
- ☐ A commitment to community building and positive collegial working;
- ☐ A wide interest in a teacher's subject area and in the world as a whole;
- ☐ A commitment by the teacher to cultivation of her/his own creative sources;
- ☐ An active practice of self-reflection by the teacher.

**"Shared principles" put into practice should collectively support the above.**

**D)** A self-study is not merely a collection of reflections on the school's history and practices, but also an objective acknowledgment of strengths and weaknesses. The value of reflection is waking up to new and better possibilities. **This should be obvious in the document.**

**E)** Specifically, there are certain areas that challenge all Waldorf schools, due mostly to the structure of the 'self-administered' school. Therefore, the following areas will be given special attention by the committee:

- ☐ **Fiscal Responsibility**
- ☐ **Communication among all stakeholders**
- ☐ **Evaluation processes and professional development for teachers/staff/board**
- ☐ **Curriculum development and review.**

Composed by Sara Walsh



## Appendix W: Application for Continuing Accreditation

Date: Enter date here

School Name: Enter name here

Address: Enter address here

Type of community: ☐ Urban ☐ Suburban ☐ Rural

Type of School: ☐ boys ☐ girls ☐ coed ☐ boarding ☐ day ☐ day & boarding

Date School Founded: Enter date here

Date School Incorporated not for profit: Enter date here

Name of School Contact: Enter name here

Contact's Title: Enter name here

Contact's Email: Enter address here

Contact's phone # w/extension: Enter # here

Range of Tuition: \$ Enter # here to \$ Enter # here

Range of Salary Scale: \$ Enter # here to \$ Enter # here

Date of most recent financial review: Enter date here

Date of most recent Full Opinion financial audit: Enter date here

Date of most recent Long Range Planning process: Enter date here

### Student Body:

Please give the appropriate number of students for each of the following categories:

<b>Total Enrollment:</b>	<i>Boys:</i>		<i>Girls:</i>	
<b>Pre-School:</b>	<i>Boys:</i>		<i>Girls:</i>	
<b>Elementary:</b>	<i>Boys:</i>		<i>Girls:</i>	
<b>Secondary:</b>	<i>Boys:</i>		<i>Girls:</i>	
<b>Postgraduate:</b>	<i>Boys:</i>		<i>Girls:</i>	
<b>Boarding:</b>	<i>Boys:</i>		<i>Girls:</i>	

### Foreign Exchange Students:

Country: Enter date here Enter # here

Country: Enter date here Enter # here

Country: Enter date here Enter # here

Country: Enter date here Enter # here

Date of previous accreditation visit: Enter date here

Team Leader: Enter date here

If previous visit was a joint accreditation, what agency was involved? Enter name here

Are you seeking joint accreditation again? Yes/ No

Any Substantive Changes in the school or its governance since the last AWSNA annual report? Yes/ No

Please comment on any outstanding issues or unresolved recommendations from previous accreditation activity.

Enter description here

Form submitted by: Enter name here

**For AWSNA Use Only:**

Date Previous Accreditation Granted:

Full Accreditation:

Conditional Accreditation:

Date conditions were met:

One Year Report received? Yes\_\_\_\_\_No\_\_\_\_\_

Three Year Report received? Yes\_\_\_\_\_No\_\_\_\_\_

AWSNA yearly reports submitted?\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix X: Guidelines for Co-Accreditation

Several schools in AWSNA seek accreditation by state or regional organizations. AWSNA accreditation is predicated upon a self-study and school visit by a Visiting Team. Other accrediting bodies also require a seven-year (or ten-year) school evaluation visit from a visiting team. Thus, AWSNA works closely with other accrediting organizations to combine resources and efforts and to minimize duplication so that the school visit is simultaneously orchestrated by the two organizations. Towards achieving the end of seamless cooperation and execution of the simultaneous AWSNA visit, schools desiring accreditation from more than one organization are reminded of the following guidelines:

### General Background Information

1. Several AWSNA member schools wish to be evaluated and accredited by other accrediting organizations as well.
2. Since both AWSNA and other organizations require evaluations periodically, it seems only sensible to avoid duplication and overlapping by having the two evaluations telescoped into a single process.
3. To accomplish this, the visiting team should have a chairperson and an assistant chairperson representing AWSNA and the other organization as well as at least 50% of the total membership of the committee from AWSNA schools.
4. By working cooperatively as one team, members can share the task of compiling and analyzing information, can exchange ideas and opinions, and can collaborate on one report that will be equally suitable for both AWSNA and the other organization.
5. If a school should contemplate such a dual evaluation, it should plan to meet the appropriate standards of the other organization as well as the *Shared Principles of AWSNA*.

### Initial Steps

1. After a school has reached the decision to pursue a dual AWSNA evaluation, the school should:
  - o Contact the other organization and the AWSNA Accreditation Office for approval.
  - o See that those two offices appoint an appropriate chairperson and assistant chairperson, subject to the concurrence of the school.
2. At the earliest opportunity, the chairperson and the assistant chairperson should make contact. It is preferred that the AWSNA instrument is used. It can be supplemented, as necessary, by another organization's guide or requirements in order to produce a single self-study.
3. When conclusions have been reached as to the total number necessary for the visiting team, the chairperson should decide which areas are to be covered by personnel selected by the other organization and which by AWSNA. Areas of study required by AWSNA and not by the other organization will be assigned to AWSNA personnel.
4. Upon notification of this distribution, the office of the other organization and AWSNA will send appropriate names to the school. AWSNA and the other organization will make every attempt to appoint people so that the simultaneous process is as familiar and the coordination as seamless, as possible.
5. Chairperson will assign personnel to areas and duties.
6. Chairperson will circulate letters to members of the visiting committee, specifying details of timing, assignment, and the like. A cover letter should indicate which section(s) of the self-study each team member should study in detail and prepare preliminary drafts of reports for those sections.

7. At least five weeks before the actual visit is to take place, the school will circulate to the team members all of the necessary preliminary information data and the Self-Study document to enable them to have a general background knowledge about the school and its operation before actually arriving on the campus.

### **During Actual Visit**

1. Chairperson(s) organize the day's activities, discussions, reports, and the like.
2. Especially in the early stages, when report ideas are being shared, it is well for members to think of themselves as a committee of the whole, sharing data and opinions, exchanging information, and seeking consistency. In short, the more input, the better understanding there will be, and the more definitive and helpful the reports will be for the school being considered.
3. It is suggested that the format of each report follow accepted AWSNA practice. The timing of the completion of those reports, and the form to be used when handed in shall be at the discretion of the chairperson.
4. At the conclusion of the program, the chairperson should lead the AWSNA members of the committee in reaching consensus as to their recommendation to the AWSNA Accreditation Review Committee concerning a level of accreditation.
5. The chairperson and assistant chairperson decide on mutually satisfactory areas of their own responsibilities for compiling and printing the final report, giving an oral exit report, and the like.

### **After the Visit**

1. On the final afternoon of the visit under AWSNA procedures, the chairperson and assistant will give a confidential preliminary report to a school representative and an oral exit report to the school community, briefly summarizing the committee's findings, but not dealing with details of specific recommendations. **The AWSNA chairperson does not reveal the confidential vote on the accreditation level, since the vote is only a recommendation to the AWSNA Accreditation Review Committee.**
2. The goal is that only one final report is necessary and that the same one will be acceptable for both AWSNA and the other organization's purposes.
3. The report should be sent to the AWSNA Accreditation Coordinator along with an electronic copy. The Chairperson will see that the other organization receives what it needs.
4. The AWSNA chairperson is reminded that copies of the final report mailed to AWSNA must be accompanied by the following documents:
  - A letter to the Accreditation Coordinator of AWSNA, reporting the recommendation of the members of the visiting team regarding accreditation.
  - The evaluators' recommendations and commendations, distilling out Major Commendations and Major Recommendations as included as part of the formal, printed report.
5. From then on, required patterns of activity will follow, pertaining to the report, interim progress reports, and the like. Specifically,
  - An AWSNA school is required to file within one year of the team visit, a Response Report/ Action Plan. This should reflect faculty and administration assessment of the major recommendations made by the visiting team. If some of the suggestions made are in the opinion of the school inappropriate or inapplicable, the reasoning for such collective opinion should be contained in that response report.
  - The school shall file with AWSNA, a three-year progress report concerning the extent to which the school has addressed all of the recommendations using Appendix Z.

## Appendix Y: AWSNA Annual Report Form

*This annual report is now handled electronically by the AWSNA Minneapolis administrative office. It is included here as a reminder to the schools.*

### **Basic Information**

School name:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

E-Mail Address:

Website Address:

AWSNA Delegates:

Date Founded:

### **Affiliations with other organizations:**

Accreditation status with AWSNA:

Other Accreditation status with (name of organization):

Last evaluation year:

Self-study instrument used:

Self-Study Coordinator:

Visiting Team Leader:

Is your school approved in a formal way by your state/province to operate?

### **General School Information**

Enrollment last year:

Enrollment this year:

Total and for each grade:

Describe cultural mixture of student body.

Any international or exchange students?

School type (coed, day, boarding, grade span):

Special programs: (extended day, summer camp, exchange students, remedial, etc.):

% Increases from last year for tuition (highest grade):

Tuition for each grade:

% Increases from Last Year for Average Salary:

Salaries: Low, Middle and High:

### **Faculty**

Number Full-time:

Number Part-time:

List names and assignments:

Faculty Chairperson:

Who left this year? Who joined this year?

How many teachers have completed a Waldorf teacher certification program?

### **College of Teachers**

Members of College of Teachers: (Indicate chair)

### **Board of Trustees**

Name of Board Chair:

Preferred mailing address:

Length & number of terms of office:

Number of current parents on board:

Dates of last two financial reviews or full-opinion audits:

Date of last long-range plan:

### **Administrative Staff**

Number full-time: Number part-time:

List names and positions.



Changes:

**Special Events & Programs**

Guest Teachers and Lecturers:

Mentors and Consultants:

Participation in Conferences and Workshops:

Interaction with other Waldorf Schools & Institutions:

**Curriculum Changes and Innovations:**

Student News & Alumni News:

Fundraising Activities & Grants received:

**HIGHLIGHT ANY SIGNIFICANT AND SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES SINCE THE LAST FILING OF THIS REPORT such as:**

- 1) Adoption of a new, substantially changed Mission Statement, including a change of the school's stated relation to anthroposophy as the foundation and method of Waldorf education
- 2) Change from an independent to public sector school
- 3) Change from non-profit to for-profit
- 4) Change of school governance
- 5) Formation of or elimination of a College of Teachers, or its equivalent.
- 6) Shift from associative pedagogical leadership by the faculty to any sort of "head of school" leadership. Covered in 4 above
- 7) Substantial full-time faculty and administrative staff turnover (by 25% or more)
- 8) Resignation or turnover of 50% or more of the Governing Body
- 9) Addition, combining, or elimination of a grade or a section of the school, such as starting or closing a high school
- 10) Relocation of the school or establishment of parallel program on another campus
- 11) Merger with another school/program
- 12) Substantial change in enrollment (by 15% or more) overall or in any section of the school
- 13) A significant change in the school's financial condition:
  - i) receipt of a transformational gift,
  - ii) significant loss of revenue,
  - iii) large assumption of debt.
  - iv) government financing of the school's operating budget

If this report is not filed on time, one reminder will be issued. If there is no response, the school will be designated as "non-compliant" on the AWSNA website listing. For reinstatement to its former status, a \$100 fee will be charged for the additional administrative activity.

## Appendix Z: AWSNA Response Report/Action Plan & Progress Report Form

*(Attach this sheet to cover letter from school)*

### Indicate One:

- ☐ Response report: due roughly a year after the AWSNA visiting team visit to the school (due the following October 15 for fall visits and the following March 15 for winter visits).
- ☐ Progress report: due three years after the AWSNA visit. (due October 15 for fall visits and March 15 for winter visits).

### School Data:

School: Insert name here

Person Responding: Insert name here

Date of Accreditation Team Visit: Insert name here

Visiting Team Leader: Insert name here

### Instructions:

*As follow-up to the evaluation/accreditation by AWSNA, a school is expected to write the following reports, including the components outlined below:*

- This sheet as cover page. (Attach a copy of the school's Annual Report to AWSNA.)
- A cover letter from the school indicating
  - An outline of any major changes in the school since the visit of the AWSNA's visiting team: e.g., significant changes in leadership, program, facilities, enrollment, finances, mission.
  - A brief description of the process used by the school in collecting data and writing the follow-up report (the expectation being that appropriate board, administration, and faculty members would be involved, such as the members of the Self-Study Steering Committee).
  - Full responses to the major recommendations with updates on implementation strategies and timetables (and cross-references to the Plan for School Improvement/ Action Plan - see below).
  - Any feedback and suggestions the school may choose to share with AWSNA and the Accreditation Review Committee (ARC) regarding the evaluation process.
- To accompany the response report, the school creates a Plan for School Improvement/ Action Plan (either a new one or an updated one--in the form of a stand-alone document, one that projects out three-to-five years), building upon what it has gleaned from its constituent survey, self-study, visiting team report (especially the major recommendations) and ARC actions.
- A catalog of responses to the AWSNA visiting team recommendations, as indicated below (See sample format.)
  - In the Response Report (first year after the visit), the school is asked to indicate the status of each major recommendation: i.e., a check mark indicates that the school agrees with the recommendation and will act upon it. (A written rationale should be provided for any of the recommendations for which the school takes exception.)
  - In the Progress Report (third year after the visit), the school is asked to provide an indication of progress made on all recommendations i.e. a check mark indicates implementation of the recommendations since the response report. A written response is required only on recommendations that the school has not implemented.

SEND ONE HARD COPY OF THIS REPORT TO THE ACCREDITATION OFFICE  
ACCOMPANIED BY AN ELECTRONIC COPY (VIA E-MAIL OR DISK)

**Format for Responses to Recommendations in the body of the AWSNA Visiting Team Report  
Three-year Progress Report**

*Please reproduce the response format below as needed to fully address the Recommendations.*

Report Area: Insert name here

Recommendation Recommendation #, from page Enter page #

AWSNA Recommendation:

Enter response here

Agree: ☐ Disagree: ☐ (Check one)

If disagree, provide rationale below:

Enter rationale here

Status of Action on Recommendation (Check one)

Implemented: ☐

In Process: ☐

Not Implemented: ☐

If not implemented, provide reason below:

Enter reason here

**SAMPLE FORMAT/RESPONSES for Recommendations from Body of Report:**

Three-year Progress Report

*Please reproduce the response format below as needed to fully address the Recommendations.*

Report Area: School & Community

Recommendation # 1 from page 3

AWSNA Recommendation:

That the school study the impact of its early dismissal program in terms of its effect on working parents and provide after-school care for those who need it.

Agree: ☒ Disagree: ☐ (Check one)

If disagree, provide rationale below:

Status of Action on Recommendation (Check one)

Implemented: ☐

In Progress: ☐

Not Implemented: ☒

If not implemented, provide reason below:

After considerable study and discussion with interested parents, the school felt that there was insufficient demand to warrant the additional expense. Instead, we are providing transportation to a nearby day care facility for those parents who request it.

