

CAIS/WASC PROGRESS REPORT

Instructions for writing and submission

The progress report provides a vehicle for the school to communicate the progress that it has made since the accreditation visit with respect both to its general situation and to the major elements of the Visiting Committee report. In drafting the progress report, it is important to carefully follow the format described below to enable the Board of Standards and the Board of Directors to clearly understand what the school has accomplished. Reports that do not follow the format below will be returned to the school and must be resubmitted correctly.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE WRITING OF THE REPORT

- Reports should be succinct and to the point. Eight pages is an average length.
- Do not provide appendices or additional material unless specifically required by the major recommendation.
- Submit the report to CAIS both in hard copy and electronically (email the attachment to jmcmanus@caisca.org and tgallagher@caisca.org).
- For schools accredited by WASC, send a cd or hard copy of the report to the WASC office (533 Airport Boulevard, Suite 200, Burlingame, CA 94010).

CONTENT OF AND FORMAT FOR THE REPORT'S THREE SECTIONS

- 1. An introduction, which should include the following:**
 - **A brief description of the school**
 - **A brief description of any major changes** that have occurred since the accreditation team visit which are not covered in response to a major recommendation (e.g., the appointment of a new head, the undertaking of major construction, a significant enrollment decline, etc.)
 - **A brief description of the process** that the school has used in following up on the Visiting Committee report.
 - **A statement** that representatives of all major constituencies participated in the preparation of the report.
 - **A statement** that the report was reviewed and approved by the Board.
- 2. A summary of actions taken to address the Visiting Committee's major recommendations only, which should include the following:**
 - **Specific evidence and examples** of what has taken place since the visit to meet the intent of each major recommendation (cross-reference with the Action Plan, when appropriate).
 - **An evaluation of the progress made**, not only in terms of what has been done, but also with respect to the effectiveness of the change.
 - **Identification of specific goals for further progress**, along with an explanation of what the school hopes to accomplish by meeting these goals.
- 3. The current version of the school's Action Plan**, along with the following information:
 - **An indication of changes or additions** to the Action Plan.
 - **A summary of progress made** with respect to the Action Plan's major elements.

CAIS/WASC Progress Report

Sample Introduction & Responses

SAMPLE INTRODUCTION

The Country Day School, in its 35th year of educating children from Tulare County, is a fully enrolled PS – 8th grade, coeducational day school located in Slauson Creek. Since its last CAIS evaluation in January of 2007, the following major changes have occurred at the school:

- A new library and gym have been built
- A new strategic plan has been developed
- A new administrative structure has been instituted

The Progress Report Process:

After the last CAIS evaluation, the faculty/staff committee structure was changed so these groups could focus on the major recommendations from the evaluation as well as follow up on the school's Action Plan. Time was set aside for these committees to focus on the work of school improvement by addressing the major recommendations. Over the past three years, minutes were kept from all meetings and a record of progress in each area was documented.

This fall, the faculty and the Board of Trustees were informed about the progress report process. Responsibilities for writing the report were defined and expectations for the content of the report were clarified. A Progress Report Steering Committee was formed to oversee the process of completing this report. In January the various committees began reviewing progress made on each major CAIS recommendation and on each item in our school Action Plan. This effort included members of the board, faculty, staff, and administration. The report was reviewed by the faculty and staff and then approved by the Board of Trustees at its meeting in March.

SAMPLE RESPONSE TO MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

I. That the Board and administration pursue their goals of raising the funds needed to realize the completion of the Facilities Master Plan. (School Plant)

Evidence and Examples of Progress Made:

The money was indeed raised, and the goals of the Facilities Master Plan were achieved. In January, only one week before our CAIS accreditation visit, the Capital Campaign Cabinet, the board, and administration publicly announced the launching of a campaign to raise \$4,000,000 for new and enhanced classrooms, library, administration building, student center, playgrounds, roadways, sidewalks, and parking.

The administration hired a capital campaign consultant to assist the Capital Campaign Cabinet in organizing and sustaining the fundraising efforts. Soon after the campaign began, the school received a \$1,000,000 gift from an outside, anonymous donor. Due to this generous gift, the Cabinet decided to raise the goal to \$5 million (of which \$4.5 million would be available for construction.) After 2 years of hard work and enormous dedication by countless volunteers, all of the philanthropic dollars were raised and the building project moved forward. The overall construction project cost \$8 million, with \$3.5 million obtained through tax-exempt bond financing.

The board approved and successfully implemented and concluded a major construction effort to improve the school's facilities. In addition, important infrastructure improvements were made to electrical, emergency alarm, water, and waste systems. Following completion of the major construction, the school's Buildings and Grounds Committee developed a plan for continued maintenance and improvement of the existing facilities.

Evaluation of Progress Made:

The community, including members of the Capital Campaign Cabinet, Buildings and Grounds Committee, the Board of Trustees, the administration, and the faculty and staff, learned a great deal over the length and breadth of this major fund-raising and building project. Overall, the Cabinet fund-raising efforts were well organized and the group never wavered in believing that they would ultimately succeed. Hiring both a consultant in fund-raising and a project manager were two of the best decisions made. The Director of Finance and Operations was also the right person at the right time to lead this project from the school's perspective.

The appearance of the campus has been significantly upgraded, programs have been enormously enhanced, buildings and classrooms are in excellent shape, and the entire school community feels energized by the results of this major effort. The success and positive nature of this campaign and construction project should help us when we launch a similar effort in the years to come.

Goals for Further Progress:

Now that this project is complete, the school's Buildings and Grounds Committee, with the assistance of the Director of Finance and Operations, is developing an ongoing facilities maintenance and improvement plan under which all of the campus facilities will be regularly reviewed. Priorities have been established for addressing and resolving any safety concerns and making such improvements as required for continued safety or to meet programmatic objectives. Although there is a defined "second phase" of the Facilities Master Plan, it is the wisdom of the board and administration that we wait until the final pledges from our recent campaign are paid before launching a new fund-raising effort. At that time, new science and performing arts facilities will become the focus of the campus improvements, which will measurably improve the school's educational program in these critical areas.

Committee:

(members listed)

II. That the school develop and implement an aggressive admissions recruitment plan to seek racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity.

Over the past three years, the administration and faculty have made significant progress in the recruitment of students and families that represent ethnic and economic diversity. Their work has been supported by the Diversity Committee of the board, which has focused attention on the school's philosophical commitment to diversity as a core value. All of this work stresses the importance of assisting and supporting incoming families that bring greater diversity to the school community.

Evidence and Examples of Progress Made:

- The Admissions Office advertises frequently to reach a wider geographical audience.
- All school ads appear with "Committed to a Diverse Community" in the text.

- The school maintains its participation in school fairs in the region.
- The financial aid budget was increased in the last three years from \$197,000 to \$380,000.
- All applicants are informed of the financial aid program on applications and during tours, open houses, and parent interviews.
- In three years our student population has grown more socially and ethnically diverse, with students of color now comprising a quarter of the student body (vs. 16% three years ago).
- The school held meetings to inform the community about the Scholarship Award Program.
- All-inclusive assistance awards help maintain anonymity for financial aid recipients.
- The faculty has participated in anti-bias curriculum work.
- Each faculty member has an Anti-Bias Classroom resource binder that includes current school resources.
- To assist in our commitment to inclusion, bilingual parents help with school tours and meetings.

Evaluation of Progress Made:

The admissions recruitment plan, the board's commitment to dramatically increasing the financial aid budget, and the progress made by the Diversity Committee have all had a positive impact on the overall direction of the school. The Committee understands and agrees that this is an area that needs and deserves continued focus and attention. We recommend that the faculty, staff, and board continue their commitment to making this school an inclusive, diverse, and welcoming community for all students, faculty and parents.

Goals for further progress:

- Continue to increase the financial aid budget.
- Continue to make financial aid available for extended student travel opportunities not included in tuition.
- Create more support for families in the process of their adjusting to our school culture.
- Create an infrastructure that includes mentoring and support for students and families of color.
- Provide training for faculty and staff, and set practices that ensure that students and families feel welcomed and fully included in all class and school activities.
- Review the venues used for school events (e.g., class parties) in an attempt to be more inclusive.
- Invite speakers informed about diversity issues to Parent Association meetings.
- Include more time on issues of diversity and inclusion in orientation for new faculty/staff.
- Create a plan to recruit and hire a more diverse faculty and staff.

Anticipated progress on these goals will enable the school to develop a more welcoming environment and a more inclusive community, consistent with the school's mission and core values. This will improve the educational experience not only for students of color, but also for students of other backgrounds.

Committee:

(members listed)