



NAIS Commission on Accreditation

Model Core Standards

Introduction

Model Core Standards are those which define the culture of independent schools and relate directly to the first of the Criteria for Effective Accreditation. While they do not serve as a template, these standards reflect the core elements of our schools and their operation and should be represented in some form in a regional or state association's accreditation instrument. Associations are expected to check that these areas are covered in their own standards and report on any discrepancies.

Mission

1. The school has a clear statement of educational mission. The stated mission and philosophy define the school's admissions, program, planning and decision-making.
2. The mission of the school is congruent with principles of academic scholarship: permitting and encouraging freedom of inquiry, diversity of viewpoints, and independent/critical thinking.

Full Disclosure

The school makes full, accurate and truthful disclosure of its mission, policies, expectations, programs and practices.

Governance

1. The governing body consistently exercises its fiduciary responsibility.
2. The governing board of the school is a deliberative body with clearly defined roles and responsibilities that are communicated to all constituents.
It provides for,
 - a. Continuity of mission;
 - b. Stability in transitions of leadership;
 - c. Establishing and monitoring needed school policies;
 - d. Comprehensive strategic and financial planning;
 - e. Financial oversight, accountability and stability;
 - f. Evaluation and support of the development of the head of school;
 - g. Clearly defined and regularly applied procedures to orient, educate, and evaluate the governing body;
 - h. A model of inclusive decision making for the school community; and
 - i. Adequate risk management policies.
3. The board delegates the operational and educational functions of the school to the head of school.

Program

1. The educational program stems from the school's beliefs about teaching and learning which are regularly reviewed and which are consistent with the mission of the school.
2. All school programs (including early childhood, residential, extended care, etc.) demonstrate consideration for the appropriate intellectual, social, physical, aesthetic, emotional and ethical development of students in all aspects of school and student life.
3. The school has sufficient resources to support the program of the school and the needs of the students and professional staff.
4. Instructional materials and equipment are of sufficient quality, quantity, and variety to provide effective support to the goals and methods of the program.
5. The school has in place a procedure for follow-up on graduate success, and utilizes resulting data to assess its goals and programs.
6. Requirements and expectations for students, parents, faculty, trustees, and employees clearly reflect the values and mission of the school.
7. Procedures are in place to assess and communicate effectively individual student progress toward meeting the goals of the program.

Fiscal Responsibility

1. There is evidence of efficient and effective management of resources sufficient to advance the mission of the school.
2. There are effective policies and procedures for management of operating and capital funds in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles and practices.

Professional Staff

1. Faculty and staff are well prepared through education and training and/or experience to fulfill the responsibilities of their positions.
2. Faculty, administration and staff members are sufficient in number to accomplish the work for which they are responsible.
3. The administration actively supports the professional development of faculty and staff through allocation of time and resources.
4. The school implements clearly defined programs for regular performance evaluation of the administration, faculty and staff.
5. Personnel practices provide ethical treatment among all faculty, administration and staff with respect to compensation, workloads, and working conditions.

Culture and Climate

In keeping with its mission, the school promotes an equitable, just, and inclusive community that inspires students to respect and value diversity.

Health & Safety

The school has a process to ensure that it demonstrates compliance with all state, local and federal regulations.