

# Guidelines for Ohio's Catholic Schools

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# *Foreword*

## **Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association**

In 1994, the Bishops of Ohio formed the Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association (OCSAA). The OCSAA is a collaborative undertaking of the Catholic dioceses in Ohio and is governed by the Superintendents of Schools who serve as the OCSAA Commission. The purpose of the OCSAA is to strengthen Catholic school identity and mission and to engage Catholic schools in the ongoing improvement of student learning.

OCSAA accreditation also requires schools to show evidence that they are implementing the **Operating Standards for Ohio's Catholic Schools – Elementary and Secondary Schools**. The Ohio Board of Education has approved these Standards as comparable to the **Operating Standards for Ohio's Schools**. Through the OCSAA accreditation process, a new Catholic school can apply for a charter from the state of Ohio and existing Catholic schools can maintain their state charters.

The **Guidelines for Ohio's Catholic Schools** outlines the process through which a school seeks and maintains accreditation. In keeping with the mission of the OCSAA, this process has as its hallmark a commitment to continuous improvement. As each school engages in strategic planning, it moves toward the vision of a high performing school in which students are grounded in their faith life and achieve at high levels.

# *Foreword*

## ***Continuous Improvement***

The OCSAA design for school continuous improvement is centered on the premise that we cannot be satisfied with our achievements of the past and we will work to support schools that systematically seek continuous improvement. Students from our Catholic schools are better prepared for careers and citizenship in the 21<sup>st</sup> century when an educational organization, focused on its' Catholic school mission in order to pursue continuous improvement, examines its successes and challenges. Generated from data, a plan to engage in continuous improvement is developed and focused on faith development, rigor and relevance. All of these efforts of continuous improvement are aimed to support students, teachers and administrators in the work of faith formation and facilitating educational opportunities to enhance core competencies for undefined futures. Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century include:

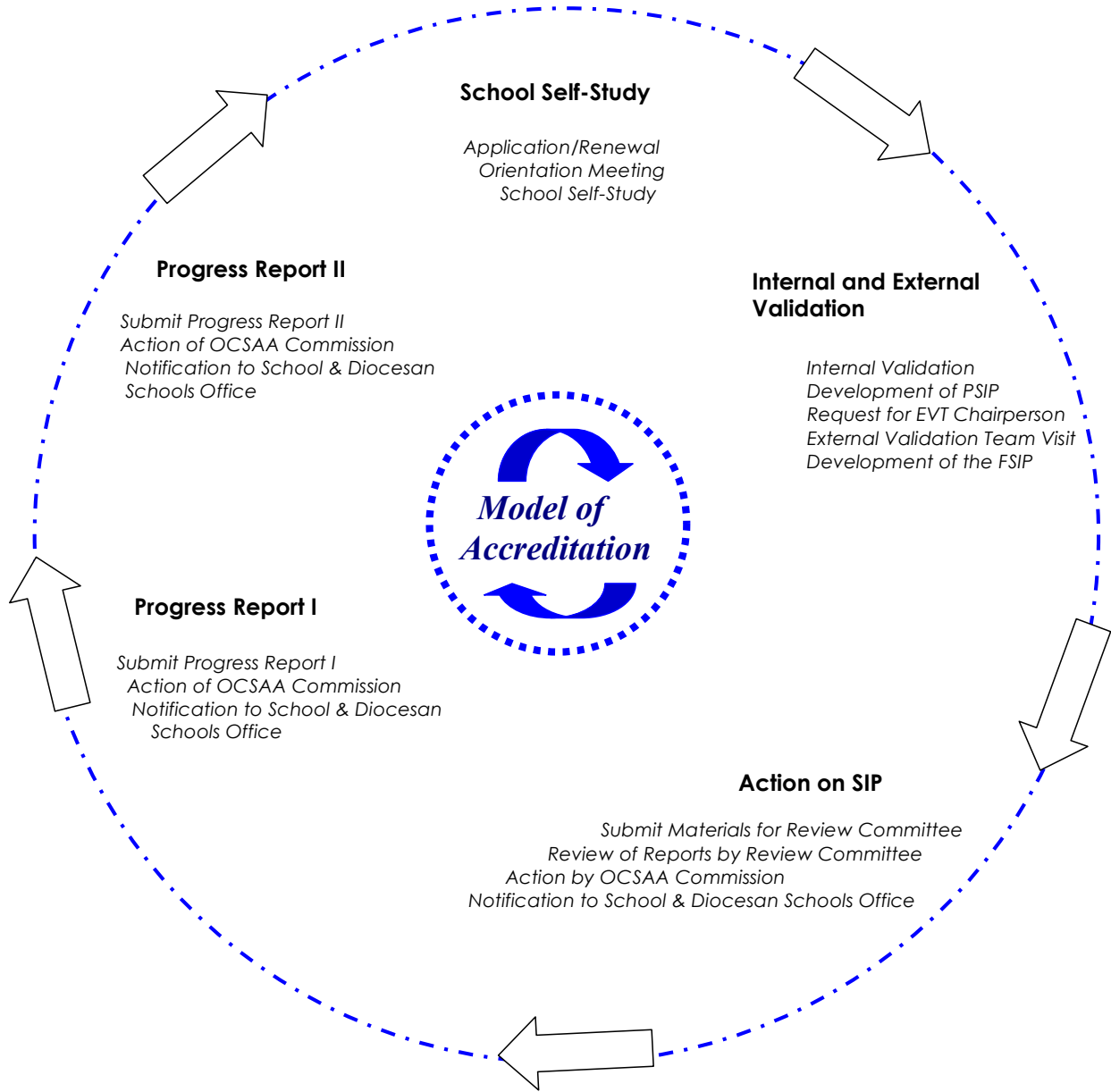
- Stewardship and Discipleship
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving \*
- Collaboration and Leadership \*
- Agility and Adaptability \*
- Initiative and Entrepreneurialism \*
- Effective Oral and Written Communication \*
- Accessing and Analyzing Information \*

The OCSAA organization serves to support schools in their process to strengthen faith development, to enhance excellence in instruction, and to use academic content to create engaged lifelong learners. Students, with a foundation of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, will strive to create a future that pays homage to their gifts from God.

\* List from Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Gap: Why Even Our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills Our Children Need - and What We Can Do About It* (New York, NY: Perseus Publishing, 2008) 12-38.

*Foreword*  
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## OCSAA ACCREDITATION MODEL



**Catholic Conference of Ohio  
Standard School Survey Report  
Due Annually**

## Chapter One

### OCSAA Self-Study Process

#### The Purpose of the Chapter:

1. To present the major steps and processes of a school self-study.
2. To identify the basic requirements for a school self-study.

#### Self-Study Introduction

A school seeking accreditation or renewal of accreditation begins by engaging in a self-study. The components of the self-study are part of the accreditation process approved by the OCSAA Commission.

1. *The process assists the school in meeting the mission of the OCSAA, which is to “strengthen Catholic school identity and mission and engage Catholic schools in the ongoing improvement of learning.”* In the final phase of the self-study process, the school produces a School Improvement Plan. The OCSAA requires that the school design one goal that will focus on the continued improvement of the school's Catholic identity and mission and one goal that will focus on improved student academic performance.
2. The process enables the school to demonstrate to the Ohio Board of Education that it is meeting the Operating Standards. The Ohio Board of Education has approved the *Operating Standards for Ohio’s Catholic Schools – Elementary and Secondary Schools*. During the self-study process, a school validates the implementation of the Operating Standards.

The self-study process approved by the OCSAA Commission incorporates Baldrige principles that view the school as a system. It emphasizes both student learning and organizational performance as well as the OCSAA focus on Catholic Identity. It requires the school to collect and analyze data in order to develop its School Improvement Plan and to validate that the school is meeting the Operating Standards.

The school documents its self-study through a series of reports:

- School Profile
- School's Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs
- Goal Areas of Improvement
- Evaluation of Organizational Effectiveness
- Validation of the Operating Standards

## Chapter One

### STEPS OF THE SCHOOL SELF-STUDY

- A. Make Application
  - Complete and Submit Application online to OCSAA (*Form 1.1*)
- B. Steering Committee
  - Form Steering Committee
  - Develop Timeline
- C. Self-Study Process\*
  - Develop School Profile in Narrative Form
  - Review, Write or Revise School's Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs
  - Identify School's Strengths and Areas of Improvement in Catholic Identity and Student Performance
  - Verify Goal Areas of Catholic Identity and Student Performance (*Forms 1.2A, 1.2B*)
  - Evaluate Organizational Effectiveness (*Forms 1.3A, 1.3B*)
  - Considering Data Analyzed from Organizational Effectiveness, Refine Areas of Concentration for Catholic Identity and Student Performance Goals
- D. Internal Validation
  - Validate the Operating Standards
  - Schedule a Date for the Internal Validation with the Diocesan Department of Education
  - Conduct Internal Validation (*Forms 2.1A, 2.1B, 2.2*)
- E. Preliminary School Improvement Plan
  - Study Researched-Based Strategies/Practices in Education
  - Develop Goals for the Preliminary School Improvement Plan (*Forms 3.1A, 3.1B*)
  - Apply Criteria to the Goals of the Preliminary School Improvement Plan

Develop the following for the School Improvement Plan:

  - Strategies
  - Timeline
  - List the Person Responsible for the Strategies
  - Resources
  - Means of Assessing the Goal
  - Documentation of Assessment
  - Apply Criteria to the Strategies, Timeline, Person Responsible, Resources, Means of Assessing the Goal and Documentation of Assessment
  - Develop Timeline for Implementation

\*A school must use a self-study process, selected by the diocese, from among those approved by the OCSAA Commission.

# Chapter One

## STEPS OF THE EXTERNAL VALIDATION

- A. External Validation Chairperson and Dates
  - Request for a Chairperson and Dates (*Form 4.1*)
  - Select Two Team Members for Each Goal
- B. External Validation Team Visit
  - Contact Chairperson
  - Develop, with the Chairperson, a Two-Day Schedule for the Team Visit
  - Send Materials to Chair, Team and Diocesan Department of Education At Least Three Weeks in Advance
- C. External Validation
- D. External Validation Team Report from the Chairperson
- E. Revise the Preliminary School Improvement Plan
  - Read and Analyze the Report from the External Validation Team (*Forms 4.3A, 4.3B, 4.4*)
  - Apply Suggestions from the External Validation Team to Preliminary School Improvement Plan (*Form 5.0*)
  - Develop a Final School Improvement Plan (*Forms 5.1A, 5.1B*)

## FINAL STEPS FOR ACCREDITATION

- A.  Prepare Reports for the OCSAA Review Committee (*Form 6.1*)
- B.  Send Reports to both the OCSAA and Diocesan Department of Education
- C.  Receive Notification of Accreditation
- D.  Implement the Final School Improvement Plan

## TWO AND FOUR YEARS FROM DATE OF ACCREDITATION

### STEPS FOR PROGRESS REPORTS I & II

- A.  Prepare Report for the OCSAA Progress Review Committee (*Form 6.2*)
- B.  Send the Report to both the OCSAA and Diocesan Department of Education
- C.  Receive Notification of Acceptance
- D.  File Documentation of Assessment of Goals (to be kept at the school)

# Chapter One

## OCSAA School Self-Study

The following self-study process has been approved by the OCSAA Commission. The steps include:

1. Completing the application for accreditation or renewal of accreditation online at [www.ocsaa.org](http://www.ocsaa.org) (*Form 1.1*);
2. Forming the Steering Committee;
3. Conducting an orientation for the process; and
4. Developing the School Profile, including:
  - a. school demographic data (two or more examples);
  - b. student performance data (two or more examples);
  - c. student, parent and staff perceptions; and
  - d. faculty perceptions of Catholic Identity.

### **STEP ONE: Completing the Application for Accreditation or Renewal of Accreditation**

- A. The school makes application online to the Association in order to begin the steps toward accreditation or renewal of accreditation.
- B. The date of the application is the beginning of the two-year self-study process. With the completion of the application, the school should begin the process of self-study.

### **STEP TWO: Forming the Steering Committee**

Another step in undertaking the self-study is to appoint a Steering Committee to plan and supervise the process. This Steering Committee is comprised of members of the faculty and administration, including the principal. The committee may include other stakeholders. The principal appoints this committee after consultation with other administrators and faculty. Generally, the Steering Committee will have from 3-5 members. This committee should be large enough to be representative but small enough to allow for effective deliberation. Ordinarily, the chairperson of the committee is a faculty member capable of guiding the self-study. The chairperson should not be the principal.

The duty of the Steering Committee is the overall organization and coordination of the process. The main function of the Steering Committee is to determine the method for reaching overall consensus on each of the self-study reports.

### **STEP THREE: Conducting an Orientation for the Process**

The success of the process will be enhanced if the faculty and staff have a clear understanding of what is involved. A school may refer to the following in an orientation session to develop this understanding.

1. The purpose of Catholic education is to make known the Gospel message revealed in the person and teaching of Jesus Christ as communicated through the Church. The Catholic Church seeks to fulfill this purpose by offering educational programs that are designed to nurture the spiritual life, to bring about full human development, and to foster a just society.
2. The Catholic school is one effective means for achieving this purpose both at the elementary and secondary levels. It is of absolute importance that each school offers quality education and leadership. The following school self-study and

# Chapter One

## OCSAA School Self-Study

evaluation process have been developed to ensure the viability of the school and assist with continuous improvement.

3. The purpose of the self-study is to serve as an evaluation and planning medium for school improvement. It enables the school to measure existing quality, to validate the Operating Standards, and to identify means and methods of attaining even higher levels of performance.
4. The self-study and the validation of the Operating Standards are an interrelated process. When the school does its self-study, it will also be validating a large portion of the Operating Standards.
5. The OCSAA accrediting process is the means by which a school secures or maintains its charter. The self-study is an essential component of this accrediting process.
6. A self-study is a self-evaluation of the school by the school community itself. It is important that the entire school community participate in the process. The benefit of the self-study is not just in the production of the report, but also in the process itself. The very activity of the study should produce improvement. As a result of the mutual effort and cooperation necessary for the study, all members of the school community will have a better understanding of the total program of the school.
7. The self-study involves all faculty, administration and other stakeholders of the school community where appropriate: pastors, governing board, staff, parents, students, business and community representatives, and diocesan personnel.
8. The OCSAA school self-study is a process whereby a school:
  - a. Collects and analyzes the data to produce a picture of the school as it is;
  - b. Declares publicly its mission and beliefs;
  - c. Evaluates itself (organizational effectiveness) in light of established criteria (Operating Standards); and
  - d. Determines areas of strength and areas of improvement and develops a School Improvement Plan to engage in continuous improvement of Catholic identity and student learning.
9. Prior to conducting the orientation, the Steering Committee should review the following list of knowledge and skills needed by the school community (primarily the faculty) for the self-study. The Steering Committee may determine that an in-service would help participants to develop the necessary knowledge and skills. Knowledge and skills include:
  - a. knowledge of various types of student performance data and other school data needed to produce a picture of student learning in the school;
  - b. knowledge of how to analyze various types of data and various assessment practices that produce data;
  - c. knowledge of how to produce a consensus statement among a large group, especially the faculty, concerning school purpose and goals;
  - d. knowledge of how to use criteria to evaluate school processes; and
  - e. knowledge of how to use the results of the evaluation to determine strengths and weaknesses which form the basis for goal development.

# Chapter One

## OCSAA School Self-Study

### 10. Considerations about the Self-Study Process

The OCSAA Self-Study Process becomes *an essential part of the school staff development process during the two years of the self-study*. Self-study is not something done to the faculty but with the faculty. Self-study is not something done by a select few of the faculty and then given to the faculty. While the Steering Committee is the group that facilitates the process, the entire faculty engage in the self-study.

### 11. Component Parts of the OCSAA Model of Self-Study

The self-study model requires each step to be completed before the next step is started. Each step builds on the data and processes of the previous step. Taken together, the School Profile, the School's Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs, Goal Areas for Improvement in Catholic Identity and Student Performance, and Evaluation of Organizational Effectiveness contribute to an understanding of the school's strengths and point to areas for improvement that the school needs to address. Each component is an important dimension which must be included to produce an accurate picture of the school.

### **STEP FOUR: Developing the School Profile**

The school profile provides a picture of the school as it is. The school uses demographic data; student performance data; and student, faculty, parent opinions or perceptions to develop the profile. The profile is the foundation document from which all the other steps of the self-study are developed. Therefore, it is very important that the data used in the profile give a succinct and accurate representation of the students and community served by the school. The data of the profile identify for the school both the strengths and areas needing improvement. The major focus of the profile is data that reveal a reflection of the school's Catholic Identity and the range of student performance.

It is important for a school to continue to collect data on a yearly basis in order to produce "many pictures of the school." In implementing the School Improvement Plan, new data collected each year will let the school know how well the plan is succeeding.

The Steering Committee determines who will carry out the following steps:

1. Study what this step requires and determine what additional resources may be needed to carry out this part of the self-study.
2. Prepare a timeline for this section of the study.
3. Plan an in-service for faculty to explain this part of the self-study.

# Chapter One

## STEPS OF THE SCHOOL SELF-STUDY

### **Steps to Develop the School Profile**

This document is designed to give the school accurate and summary data of the students and community. You will collect, organize and analyze relevant and pertinent information, from the past five years, that will be used to inform decisions regarding existing programs and stimulate thought and planning for improvement initiatives.

The profile is the summary of information necessary to understand your existing characteristics of students, school and community.

Your school improvement plan should reflect your school's need at a given time in history and the data collected and presented in the profile will point to that need.

#### **A. Brief description of the process used to develop the report**

#### **B. Presentation, analysis and implications of documentation collected as a result of assessment listed in the previous School Improvement Plan**

As your school continues its commitment to continuous improvement it is critical to reflect on lessons learned from implementing the previous school improvement plan. Essential components of this section would include reviewing the school's previous goals and indicating the degree of success for each goal, i.e., identifying what are the key outcomes of the process, what has been learned and accomplished as a result of the work done to date. Continuous improvement does not exist in a vacuum and therefore, it is imperative to articulate this relationship between what has been done, what is currently being done, and what are the next steps for the future of the school. A school might identify how the previous plan has given the school direction for the future.

1. Analyze Progress Reports I and II and the collected documentation accumulated as a result of the assessment.
2. Use the following questions and incorporate the responses into the School Profile Report.
  - a. What were the achievements under the previous School Improvement Plan?
  - b. What was learned from implementing the School Improvement Plan that can be applied to this new process?
  - c. Do the results of the School Improvement Plan have any implications for the new self-study? Why or why not?

#### **C. Presentation, analysis and implications of student demographic data for the School Improvement Plan**

The following information should be presented and analyzed in the profile:  
School Characteristics

Questions to consider:

*What are the Catholic cultural characteristics of the school?*

*What are the major defining features and characteristics of the school?*

*What are the strongest characteristics of the school?*

*What distinguishing factors set this school apart from other schools?*

*Have there been significant changes in the major characteristics of the school over the past several years?*

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### STEPS OF THE SCHOOL SELF-STUDY

#### Examples of Data:

Description of the following: school history; governance; i.e., order, diocesan, recent restructuring; the physical plant, etc.

Longitudinal data on the following: faculty demographics, tuition, school business partnerships, transportation, dress code, special needs support, instructional resources, state and diocesan certification, etc.

#### Student and Community Characteristics

Questions to consider:

*What are the general characteristics of the students served by the school?*

*What are the general characteristics of the community?*

*Are children ready to learn when they enter your school?*

*Do students meet the behavioral expectations of your school?*

#### Examples of Data:

Description of the following: chamber of commerce statistics of the surrounding community

Longitudinal data on the following: Catholic vs. non-Catholic, mobility rates; poverty level; parish baptismal rates and elementary enrollment; graduation from 8th grade feeder schools and high school attendance; student behavior demographics –discipline, attendance, tardiness, etc.

#### **D. Presentation, analysis and implications of student performance data for the School Improvement Plan**

##### Student Performance Data

Questions to consider:

*What are types of assessments of student learning that are currently employed by the school?*

*What do the results of these assessments indicate about the current levels of student performance of the expectations for their learning?*

*What do the assessments of student learning indicate are the areas of strength in students' achievement? Limitations in student learning?*

*Are students prepared for further education at each level of schooling?*

*Do students complete their schooling?*

#### Examples of Data:

Longitudinal data on the following: at least two examples of student performance data, i.e., standardized tests, observation of student performance, samples of student work, ACT/SAT, percentage that attend post-secondary institutions, number of students in Advanced coursework, assessment of religious knowledge

#### **E. Presentation, analysis and implications of faculty, student and parent perceptions of the school for the School Improvement Plan**

##### Stakeholder Perspectives on the Quality of Education

Questions to consider:

*What are the opinions of the students, teachers, parents and community members about the quality of the school?*

## Chapter One

### STEPS OF THE SCHOOL SELF-STUDY

*What does each group of stakeholders believe are the strengths and limitations of the school?*

*Have opinions about the quality of the school changed over the years? If so, what are the trends or shifts in opinion that have been identified?*

*What are the implications of the results of the surveys of the school's stakeholders for the design and development of the school improvement plan?*

Examples of Data:

Description of the following: observation vs. analysis, description of what the perception is based

Longitudinal data on the following: trend analysis on the survey questions

1. Decide what data is to be collected in order to provide the picture of the school. The school is required to collect parent, teacher and student perceptions and opinions.
2. Decide the optimum means for collecting perceptions and opinions from the following groups: parents, students, faculty, graduates (optional), and community (optional). This may take the form of written surveys, telephone interviews, focus groups or questionnaires. Questionnaires for students, parents and staff can be found on the OCSAA website. *The school has permission to use the survey forms as long as the copyright notice is included.*
3. Analyze the responses from the following: parents, students, faculty, graduates (optional), and community (optional).

#### **F. Presentation and analysis of Catholic Identity data**

1. Decide what data is to be collected in order to provide the picture of the school.
2. Have faculty, administration, and other stakeholders as deemed necessary complete Assessing the School's Catholic Identity. Tabulate and present results from Assessing the School's Catholic Identity questionnaire.

#### **G. Prepare the School Profile Report**

For a more complete listing of samples of school data that could be contained within each of the four sections please refer to the "Resource" section on the web site, [www.ocsaa.org](http://www.ocsaa.org).

This section requires a narrative description of the process used to produce the profile as well as the process used to build consensus supporting the Profile. Not all data require a visual representation, i.e., chart or graph; however, trends, summaries, comparisons, etc. lend themselves to visual representation. Any information represented with a chart or a graph requires a narrative analysis of the data.

#### **H. Share report with faculty and reach consensus**

## Chapter One

### STEP FIVE: Writing/Revising the School's Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs

#### DEFINING THE SCHOOL'S BELIEFS AND MISSION:

Integral to the school self-study process is developing, or in some cases revising, and articulating the school's beliefs and mission as they are the foundation upon which all else is promulgated. All policies, procedures, practices, guidelines and decisions should reflect the core of the school's beliefs and mission statement. It is critical to periodically review these documents to ensure that the needs of all constituents are being appropriately addressed. It would be remiss and unacceptable to blindly accept the mission statement and/or statement of beliefs as these components are dependent upon and representative of current demographics, i.e., changes in faculty, students, school culture, etc. Data in the profile provides justification for the school's statement of beliefs and mission statement.

This step requires the writing of a Mission Statement, and it directs the faculty to study and analyze the school's mission and reflect on how the school's mission should shape and form the school. **A Mission Statement is a brief statement that defines the purpose and function of the school: the reason the school exists.**

Necessary for developing the Mission Statement and the Statement of Beliefs are:

- ~A collaborative process to build or refine the shared vision.
- ~An integration data from the profile when developing the mission.
- ~Research in Catechetical formation and on best practices and emerging trends.
- ~Words should be simple and brief – easily understood by all.
- ~Reflective of the input of the stakeholders not the vision and prose of a few key people.

A Mission Statement:

1. Identifies the sponsorship of the school as it relates to the local Church;
2. Relates the school as part of the evangelizing mission of the Church;
3. Addresses the needs of its specific student population;
4. States a commitment to quality education; and
5. Identifies other components unique to the school.

The mission statement expresses a vision for which the school strives.

Questions to consider:

- Does the mission statement reference Catholic knowledge, teachings and/or beliefs?
- Does the mission statement motivate and inspire?
- Does the mission statement drive the decisions impacting the work of the school?
- Does the mission statement give clear purpose and direction to the school?
- Could the administration, faculty, staff, parents and community members readily use the mission statement to guide their own action in behalf of the school?
- Are our beliefs reflected on behalf of our Catholic identity and student learning?

A Statement of Beliefs is a list of what a school believes and values concerning the process of education, knowledge, the human person and the ministry of Catholic education. A Statement of Beliefs is an abridged version of school philosophy. In place of a narrative description of what a school values and believes about education, learning, and Catholic ministry (philosophy), the Statement of Beliefs simply lists the core beliefs that a school uses to direct its actions.

## Chapter One

The statement of beliefs represents the value structure of the school.

Questions to consider:

Is the statement of beliefs clear and precise?

Are they free of words that may not be understood by all?

What would be different in your school tomorrow if these beliefs were fully implemented?

Is everyone willing to make a commitment to the direction indicated by these beliefs?

Are our beliefs reflected on behalf of our Catholic identity and student learning?

An indicator that the Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs is a "lived reality" in a school is if anyone visiting the school sees, hears, feels the crux of these two statements.

This section requires a narrative description of the process and the process used to build consensus to develop the school's Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs.

### **Steps to Write/Revise the School's Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs**

The Steering Committee determines who will carry out the following steps:

1. Refer to the online resources ([www.ocsaa.org](http://www.ocsaa.org)) to better understand the relationship of Catholic education to the ministry of the Catholic Church.
2. Prepare a timeline for this section of the study.
3. Plan in-service for faculty to explain this part of the self-study.
4. Schedule time for faculty and others (school board, etc.) to review the school's Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs about Catholic education.
5. Prepare a meeting for review of the school's beliefs about student learning and the school's Mission Statement.
6. Review or develop a Mission Statement and a Statement of Beliefs about Catholic education.
7. Schedule a meeting for faculty to review and come to a consensus about the Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs.
8. Prepare a final school Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs.
9. Publish the final version for the school community.
10. Complete the School's Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs Report which must contain the following:
  - a. Brief Description of the Process Used to Develop the Statements;
  - b. School's Mission Statement; and
  - c. School's Statement of Beliefs.

## Chapter One

### **STEP SIX: Formulating School's Goal Areas of Improvement for Catholic Identity and Student Performance**

The profile provides a school with a snapshot of itself at this time in history. In light of who the school is (profile), the school's purpose (mission), and what the school believes about education and Catholic ministry (statement of beliefs), the school then formulates a vision of what it hopes students will achieve. Although a school could develop a vision of its hopes for the school's facilities, financial security, or any other characteristic or concern, the OCSAA Self-Study focuses only on Catholic identity and student performance.

After reviewing the Profile, Mission Statement, and Statement of Beliefs, the school articulates its vision by identifying strengths and areas of improvement for Catholic identity and student performance.

Upon completion of this section, Desired Results for Student Learning, the areas of Catholic identity and student performance, will be identified and further refined. This process begins with a review of past goal areas and subsequent progress toward said goals. Goal areas that present themselves from the self-study are identified and the correlation between past focus and current direction is articulated. You are required to reference the data from the previous sections, i.e., Profile, Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs, to justify the selected goal areas. It is at this point that research on best practices and current trends and a review of current school, diocesan, state and national goals is conducted to assist in establishing goals that are significant and enduring, give the school direction for the future, and move the school beyond current practice. Establishing a relationship between and amongst each of the steps will elucidate the topic areas on which the plan will be focused.

Questions to consider when developing both the Catholic Identity and Student Performance goals:

Did the process of defining the desired results for student learning take into account the perceptions of all those who have a stake in the achievement of students?

Are the desired results for student learning aligned with the beliefs and mission of the school?

Did the process of defining the desired results for student learning take into account current educational research and studies of future trends that have implications for student learning?

Are the desired results for student learning consistent with diocesan, state, and national expectations or goals for student learning?

Are the desired results for student learning responsive to student learning needs? (e.g., Did the school take into account the current levels of student performance represented in the data considered in defining the desired results for student learning?)

Do the statements of the desired results for student learning clearly describe what a well-educated student should know and be able to do?

Are the stated expectations for student learning measurable? Has the school clearly described the type of evidence (e.g., performance-based indicators) of students' achievement of the expectations for their learning? Could students gauge their own progress in achieving the expectations for their learning based on these indicators?

Have priorities for improving student learning been identified by the steering committee? Were these priorities based on a comprehensive analysis of student performance?

## Chapter One

This section requires a narrative description of the process used to identify the topic areas as well as the process used to build consensus supporting these areas.

### **Steps to Formulate School's Goal Areas of Improvement for Catholic Identity and Student Performance**

The Steering Committee determines who will carry out the following steps:

1. Study what this step requires and determine what additional resources may be needed to carry out this part of this self-study.
2. Prepare a timeline for this section of the study.
3. Plan an in-service for faculty to explain this part of the self-study.
4. Review the School Profile, the Mission Statement and the Statement of Beliefs with the faculty to identify strengths and areas of improvement for Catholic identity and student performance in light of the information learned about the school from the self-study thus far. Use Forms 1.2A and 1.2B to record this information.
5. Reach consensus, as a faculty, on the areas of improvement. If necessary, complete new Forms 1.2A and 1.2B which reflect faculty consensus.
6. Retain Forms 1.2A and 1.2B for the Internal Validation visit.

### **STEP SEVEN: Evaluating the School's Organizational Effectiveness**

The first three steps of the process focused on Catholic identity and student performance. The last step looks at the school as a system. The school evaluates itself on how well it can build on its strengths and address the areas of improvement in the School Improvement Plan.

The school uses rubrics that are correlated with Operating Standards and evaluates itself in terms of how well the standard is being implemented in the school. The school then identifies its strengths and areas of improvement.

This section focuses on an analysis of the quality of the work of the school on behalf of student learning, i.e., the effectiveness of the school's instructional practices and organizational conditions in supporting students' achievement of the desired results for their learning. One goal of this step is to build and strengthen the capacity of the school's instructional system and organizational conditions to support student achievement in the selected goal areas.

Steps to facilitate this process:

1. Identify the strengths and limitations of the school's instructional and organizational effectiveness in the following critical dimensions based on or in relationship to the established Catholic identity and student performance goal areas:
  - a. Catholic Identity
  - b. Organization Leadership
  - c. Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement
  - d. Student and Stakeholder Focus
  - e. Faculty and Staff Focus
  - f. Educational Programs and Support
  - g. Using Data to Improve Performance Results

## Chapter One

2. Collect data and evidence of instructional and organizational effectiveness to verify strengths or to establish a baseline for growth
3. Define goals for building and strengthening the capacity of the school's instructional and organizational effectiveness

Questions to consider:

Based on your review and analysis of your school's instructional and organizational effectiveness, what would be the most appropriate target goals for building and strengthening the capacity of the school's instructional practices and organizational conditions to support students' achievement of the desired results for their learning?

How can the school most effectively build on its strengths to further maximize their benefits in support student achievement?

How can the school most effectively address its limitations and areas in need of improvement in order to strengthen the capacity of the school to support student achievement?

This section requires a narrative description of past work and impact on goals. Also included in the narrative is a section on the process used to identify the topic areas as well as the process used with the faculty to reach consensus and to discuss instructional and organizational effectiveness in relationship to the goal areas and the justification, based on data, of these decisions. Finally, a description of the impact on instruction and the organization as a result of implementation, i.e., how are things done differently than before implementation.

### **Steps to Evaluate the School's Organizational Effectiveness**

The Steering Committee determines who will carry out the following steps:

1. Study what this step requires and determine what additional resources may be needed to carry out this part of this self-study.
2. Prepare a timeline for this section of the study.
3. Plan an in-service for faculty to explain this part of the self-study.
4. Have faculty complete the Evaluation of Organizational Effectiveness using the rubrics.
5. Faculty should record responses on the individual faculty response sheet.
6. Compile the results.
7. Share results with faculty and reach consensus.
8. Compile the Evaluation of Organizational Effectiveness Report which must contain the following:
  - a. Brief Description of the Process Used to Develop the Report;
  - b. Presentation and Analysis of "Rubric for Evaluation of Organizational Effectiveness."

## Chapter Two

### **The Purpose of the Chapter:**

1. To outline the processes or procedures for Internal Validation.
2. To validate that the areas of improvement identified for the School Improvement Plan are a direct result of the data analyzed from the self-study process and the Operating Standards.
3. To ascertain that one of the school's goals will address Catholic identity and mission.
4. To ascertain that one of the school's goals will address student performance.

### **Preparation for Internal Validation:**

1. Steering Committee reviews the following:  
Form 2.1A: Verification of Operating Standards  
Form 2.1B: Additional Documents Needed for Verification  
Form 2.2: Internal Validation Report
2. Steering Committee reviews documentation from Progress Reports I and II and has this documentation available for review.
3. Steering Committee assures that all reports and documents that validate the Operating Standards are collected and accessible.
4. Steering Committee has available areas of improvement that have emerged from the self-study and may become goals of the Preliminary School Improvement Plan.
5. The Internal Validation will be conducted according to diocesan practice.

### **Process for Internal Validation:**

1. The Internal Validation will occur prior to the External Validation Team Visit.
2. Diocesan OCSAA coordinator(s) will establish the schedule for Internal Validation visits.
3. Person or team, according to diocesan practice, will examine how data were used in developing the following self-study reports and in identifying areas of improvement for Catholic identity and student performance:
  - School Profile;
  - School's Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs;
  - Evaluation of Organizational Effectiveness; and
  - Validation of the Operating Standards  
Form 2.1A: Verification of Operating Standards  
Form 2.1B: Additional Documents Needed for Verification
4. Person or team, according to diocesan practice, will submit to the diocesan Department of Education/OCSAA Coordinator(s) a copy of the following forms:
  - Form 2.1A: Verification of Operating Standards;
  - Form 2.1B: Additional Documents Needed for Verification; and
  - Form 2.2: Internal Validation Report
5. School is now ready to develop the Preliminary School Improvement Plan.

## *Chapter Two*

### **VALIDATION OF STANDARDS**

The Operating Standards are posted on the website, [www.ocsaa.org](http://www.ocsaa.org). The entire OCSAA process, including the validation of Operating Standards, is intended to direct the school toward ongoing improvement. Identifying how the Operating Standards are working in the school is one step in this process.

## Chapter Three

### The Purpose of the Chapter:

1. To provide guidelines for the development of the Preliminary School Improvement Plan.

### I. School Improvement Plan

The development of the School Improvement Plan consists of two phases:

1. The school develops a *Preliminary School Improvement Plan* before the External Validation Team Visit.
2. The school revises the Preliminary School Improvement Plan considering the recommendations of the External Validation Team to develop a *Final School Improvement Plan*.

### II. Development of the Preliminary School Improvement Plan

The appropriate members of the school community will engage in the following steps to develop the Preliminary School Improvement Plan.

- A. Review the work of the Internal Validation Process.
- B. Study the Description of the Components of the School Improvement Plan (p. 17) to develop a clear understanding of the components of the Preliminary School Improvement Plan.
- C. Develop the Goals – A goal is an end toward which a school directs some specific effort. A goal is a specific and measurable accomplishment to be achieved within a specific time and under specific cost restraints. **The school's self-study identifies major areas of concern or areas of improvement which are developed into goals for the School Improvement Plan.**
  1. Write a student goal for Catholic identity that comes out of the self-study (*Form 1.2A*).
  2. Write a student goal for student performance that comes out of the self-study (*Form 1.2B*).
  3. Each goal must be significant and enduring.
  4. An individual goal does not have to last the four years of the plan; however, the School Improvement Plan as a whole must cover a four-year timeline.

#### Validating the **GOAL**

- o Goals of the School Improvement Plan flow from the school's Catholic identity and mission, profile, and Evaluation or Organizational Effectiveness;
- o The goal is student focused, describing what the student will do and learn as a result of the plan;
- o The Catholic identity goal specifically references Catholic beliefs, teaching and/or practices (This does not necessarily require inclusion in the goal statement, but is included in the strategies);
- o The goal is measurable, with a starting point and an ending point in measuring the goal;
- o There is data in the self study to support the goals.
- o The goal does not conflict with overall school practice;

## Chapter Three

- o The goal engages the school in continuous improvement;
  - o The goal challenges the school to go beyond current practice; and
  - o The goal gives direction to the school for the future.
- D. Develop the Strategies for Each Goal – An action that when completed will contribute to the outcome or goal.
1. Review the literature on best practices to see what educational research says about the best strategies for development of the particular goal.
  2. Determine the type(s) of faculty professional development that will be needed to achieve the goal.
  3. List the strategies that will be needed to bring about the change.  
Validating the **STRATEGIES**
    - o Staff development is included as a strategy;
    - o There is implementation of the knowledge learned from the staff development;
    - o The strategies support the intent of the goal;
    - o The strategies are based on “researched best practices”;
    - o The strategies engage the school in continuous improvement;
    - o The strategies give direction to the school for the future;
    - o There is a means to collect baseline data for each goal;
    - o There is data to compare to the baseline data to measure growth;
    - o Strategies contain ongoing assessment to monitor the progress of the plan; and
    - o The strategies are logical and give direction for implementation.
- E. Complete the Action Plan
1. Develop a timeline for each strategy. This is the **period of time** over which the school will formally work on the specific strategy.  
Validating the **TIMELINE**
    - o The timeline is logical, and will give direction for implementation;
    - o The timeline of the strategies are distributed over the four-year plan so as to optimize implementation of the plan; and
  2. List the **title or job position** of the person who is responsible for coordinating this section of the plan.  
Validating the **PERSON RESPONSIBLE**
    - o The person responsible is indicated and is responsible for ensuring that said strategy is implemented.
  3. Determine the resources - **human, material, and/or monetary** - needed to implement each particular goal.  
Validating the **RESOURCES**
    - o The resources are sufficient and logical. A dollar amount is given, where appropriate.
  4. Determine the assessment of the goal, based on data, to know if and to what degree the goal was accomplished.  
Validating the **ASSESSMENT OF THE GOAL**
    - o Means for assessing the goal will provide evidence of degree of accomplishment of the goal. (The description of the assessment usually begins with a verb.)

## *Chapter Three*

5. Determine the documentation to collect to show evidence that the goal has been accomplished.

### Validating the **DOCUMENTATION OF THE ASSESSMENT**

- o Documentation will provide physical evidence for accomplishment of the goal. (The description of the document usually begins with a noun.)
- F. Use the Preliminary School Improvement Plan and the Timeline for Implementation of the Preliminary School Improvement Plan Forms in preparing and assembling the Preliminary School Improvement Plan (*Forms 3.1A and 3.1B*).
  - G. Evaluate the components of the Preliminary School Improvement Plan by referencing Components for the School Improvement Plan (p. 17).
  - H. Share the Preliminary School Improvement Plan with the faculty to reach consensus.
  - I. Revise Preliminary School Improvement Plan as a result of the faculty meeting.

## Description of Components of the School Improvement Plan

### Chapter Three

**School:**

**OCSAA #:**

**Date:**

**Goal: Flows from your self-study, supports your mission statement and your statement of beliefs, is significant and enduring and must be student-focused**

<b>Strategies</b> <i>(number each one)</i>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<p>Must be a means to achieve the goal.</p> <p>Must be in chronological order. (The order in which you hope to accomplish the stipulated actions.)</p> <p>Must be reasonable. Each action can be accomplished.</p> <p>Must be specific.</p> <p>Must not enumerate what is already current practice. The goal is to challenge the school to go beyond current practice.</p> <p>Must not include steps already accomplished.</p> <p>Include staff development as a strategy.</p> <p>The strategies are based on "researched best practices".</p> <p>The goals and strategies challenge the school to go beyond current practices; engage the school in continuous improvement; and, give direction to the school for the future.</p> <p>The goal is measurable with a starting point (pre-test) and an ending point (post-test).</p> <p>The strategies contain ongoing assessment to monitor the progress of the plan.</p>	<p>Be specific. Do not use the term "ongoing." Use semesters, e.g., Sem 1, 2010.</p> <p>Create a plan that sustains a four-year commitment. Do not have every step starting at the same time. Space the actions so you won't be overwhelmed.</p>	<p>List the person who will be the "point person". Who will coordinate the efforts of all individuals involved?</p> <p>Do not use a specific person's name; use a title.</p> <p>Be sure the person can be held accountable if they do not fulfill their responsibility. Do not use a parent, auxiliary services personnel, students or other individuals not paid by the school.</p> <p>Responsible does not mean doing all the work.</p>	<p>Be specific.</p> <p>List what you will need in terms of materials, staff development, etc. to complete the action.</p> <p>Include an estimated budget (dollar) amount.</p> <p>Prices change during a four-year plan, but you must begin thinking about dollar amounts.</p> <p>Include time for meetings, e.g., grade-level or department meetings.</p> <p>Might need to budget money for substitute teachers or presenters.</p>
<p><b>Means for Assessing the Goal</b></p> <p>Assess only the goal, not each strategy.</p> <p>Determine what means of assessment will demonstrate that you are successful in meeting the goal (i.e., survey, evaluate, analyze test results, etc.). Include, wherever possible, student growth indicators.</p> <p>Variety of measurements to discover as accurately as possible whether the plan achieves its goal; actions directed at acquiring information means for assessing the impact of the goals; means of assessing progress; assessment methods</p>	<p><b>Documentation of Assessment</b></p> <p>Collect the evidence that is the result of your assessment. This would include the test results, CDs/DVDs of projects, classes, pictures and analysis of surveys.</p>		

(Use "File | Save As" to give this file a new name reflecting the target area and goal number BEFORE entering data. Create a separate file for each goal. If more than one page is required per goal, create a second file for that goal.)

## Chapter Four

### The External Validation: Preparation and Visit

#### The Purpose of the Chapter:

1. To outline the process for preparing for and completing an External Validation Team Visit.
2. To acquaint schools with the forms used during an External Validation Team Visit.

#### I. Selection of the External Validation Team

##### A. Purpose and Objectives of the External Validation Visit

1. To validate the school's self-study by providing the school and the Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association with an objective on-site verification that the Operating Standards are fully operative in the school.
2. To validate, with constructive comments and recommendations, the school's Preliminary School Improvement Plan.

##### B. Composition, Selection, and Appointment of the Team

The team is composed of (a) a chairperson, appointed by the Director of the Association, in consultation with the principal and (b) additional persons selected by the school.

##### 1. Chairperson

- a. A person who has served as a chairperson of an External Validation Team at a school may not be the chairperson of another External Validation Team at the same school.
- b. Three months before the dates of the proposed visit, the **principal or designee** submits the External Validation Request for Appointment of Chairperson and Approval of Dates Form to the OCSAA Director (*Form 4.1*)
- c. The Director will autoreply that the request has been submitted. Once confirmed, the OCSAA Director will send official notification to the principal regarding contact information for the chairperson and dates of the External Validation Team Visit.

##### 2. Team Members

- a. The **principal or designee** selects the members of the External Validation Team. The members of the External Validation Team shall not be employees of the school or parish. They are selected according to their ability to participate in the process (including the **entire** length of the visit) and react constructively to the school's Preliminary School Improvement Plan. A school seeking Dual Accreditation with the North Central Accrediting Association is required to have a representative on the External Validation Team.
  - b. When selecting the members of the team, there should be a minimum of two persons per goal, in addition to the chairperson. The **principal or designee** will assign goals to the team members.
3. Any exceptions or special accommodations to the aforementioned need to be submitted in writing to the Director for approval.

## Chapter Four

### II. Preparation for the External Validation Team

- A. The OCSAA Director notifies **principal or designee** and the chairperson of the External Validation Team of the dates for the visit. Two days will be needed for the External Validation Team visit.
- B. **No later than three weeks prior** to the External Validation Team Visit, the **principal or designee** submits online (in the school's folder) the following reports and forms: School Profile; School's Mission Statement and Statement of Beliefs; Evaluation of Organizational Effectiveness; Validation of Operating Standards; Preliminary School Improvement Plan; Timeline for Implementation of the Preliminary School Improvement Plan; External Validation Team Form; and if applicable, Verification of Goal Areas. If these materials are not submitted by said deadline, the chairperson will contact the Director of the OCSAA to cancel the visit. A new date and chairperson will be assigned by the Director.
- C. **No later than three weeks prior to the visit, the principal or designee** also submits online the completed Operating Standards Verification forms: Verification of Operating Standards; Additional Documents Needed for Verification; and, Internal Validation Report.
- D. Upon the request of the chairperson, the school will submit paper copies to said chairperson.
- E. **At least two weeks prior to the visit**, the chairperson contacts the **principal or designee** to make all specific arrangements (e.g., time schedule, supplies, etc.) regarding the visit.

### III. External Validation of the Operating Standards and the Preliminary School Improvement Plan

#### A. Validation of the Operating Standards

**During the visit**, the chairperson meets with the **principal or designee** and others as necessary:

1. to review Progress Reports I and II and the documentation from the assessments collected for the previous Final School Improvement Plan; and
2. to review the documentation for all Operating Standards.

#### B. Validation of the Preliminary School Improvement Plan

**During the visit**, the **team members** who have been assigned the same goal meet with school representatives to discuss the goal and its action plan. Team members report their consensus on External Validation Individual Goal Worksheet (*Please refer to Forms 4.3A and 4.3B*).

At the team's closing meeting, the entire External Validation Team reviews all group consensus forms and determines recommendations that will be included in the Final Report External Validation Team (*Form 4.4*).

## Chapter Four

### C. Closing Meeting

The visit concludes with the team sharing its preliminary findings with the principal and school designees. All materials are to be collected and returned to the school hosting the visit.

### D. Final Report of the External Validation Team

Based on the discussion at the closing team meeting and the reports submitted from the team, the chairperson writes the Report of the External Validation Team. This report shall include the following: Verification of Operating Standards; Additional Documents Needed for Verification; External Validation Individual Goal Work-sheet; Final Report External Validation Team; External Validation Team Expense Report Form; and, Report on the External Validation Team Visit. **Within two weeks of the External Validation Team Visit**, the chairperson submits the Final Report to the principal, diocesan Department of Education, and the OCSAA Director.

### E. Expenses of the External Validation Team:

The school is responsible for all expenses of the External Validation Team which relate directly to the visit (e.g., lodging, meals, travel). No honorarium or stipend is to be paid to the chairperson or members of the External Validation Team.

The chairperson shall approve all claims for reimbursement of expenses incurred by team members. The chairperson shall submit the expenses to the principal or designee of the school at the end of the visit using the Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association External Validation Team Expense Report Form (*Form 4.5*). **These expenses are to be paid no later than 1 month following the visit.**

## Chapter Five

### **The Purpose of the Chapter:**

1. To provide guidelines for the development of the Preliminary School Improvement Plan.

### **I. Development of the Final School Improvement Plan**

- A. Reconvene the Steering Committee after receiving the External Validation Team Report.
- B. Develop the Final School Improvement Plan by addressing the recommendations of the External Validation Team and using Response to Recommendations of the External Validation Team Form (*Form 5.0*).
- C. Share revisions with the faculty and gain consensus.
- D. Format the Final School Improvement Plan using the following forms: Response to Recommendations of the External Validation Team; Final School Improvement Plan; and, Timeline for Implementation of the Final School Improvement Plan (*Forms 5.1A and 5.1B*).

### **II. You are now ready to submit your reports to your account on the OCSAA website for review and action regarding accreditation no later than one month following the visit.**

## Chapter Six

### Submitting Documentation for Action on Accreditation

#### The Purpose of the Chapter:

1. To describe the final three phases of the accreditation process (actions of the OCSAA Review Committee, Commission, and Progress Review).
2. To provide guidelines for preparing the reports for the Review Committee.
3. To provide guidelines for preparing reports for Progress Review.

#### I. Documentation - Preparing the Reports for the OCSAA Review Committee

- A. After the External Validation Team Visit, the school develops the Final School Improvement Plan and submits the following documents: Final Reports from the External Validation Team; Response to the External Validation Team; Final School Improvement Plan; and, Timeline for Final School Improvement Plan (*Forms 4.3A, 4.3B, 4.4, 5.0, 5.1A and 5.1B*).
- B. ***The school submits materials to be reviewed by the OCSAA Review Committee by September 30, January 30, March 30 or April 30.***

#### II. Evaluation by Review Committee of the OCSAA

The Review Committee of the OCSAA reviews the documents submitted and recommends to the OCSAA Commission one of the following actions:

- A. The school be granted full accreditation.
- B. The school be granted full accreditation with comments.
- C. The school be granted accreditation with conditions. This recommendation requires the Review Committee to indicate the corrective action, and the timeline in which the corrective action must be completed, in order for the school to advance from accreditation with conditions to full accreditation.
- D. Schools that cannot verify that they meet the Operating Standards are automatically denied accreditation until the requirement is satisfied. The reports are not reviewed until all Operating Standards are fully operative in the school.

#### III. Action by the Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association Commission

Final responsibility for accreditation rests with the OCSAA Commission. Commission action ordinarily will occur at the regularly scheduled meetings of the Commission. Accreditation will be for a period of 6 years.

##### A. Schools recommended for full accreditation

Director submits names to Commission for approval.

##### B. Schools recommended for full accreditation with comments

Director submits names of schools with comments for approval.

## Chapter Six

### **C. Schools recommended for accreditation with conditions**

Director submits synopsis for each school. The Commission discusses each school, one at a time. If there is agreement on conditional status, corrective action, and timeline, the Commission requests the Director to communicate this, in writing, to the school and to the appropriate diocesan Department of Education.

If there is not agreement, then a decision is made by majority vote of the Commission. The Superintendent of the diocese in which the school is located does not vote.

The Commission recommends that the Director to communicate the Commission's decision, in writing, to the school and to the appropriate diocesan Department of Education.

### **IV. Notification of the School and Diocesan Department of Education**

The decision of the Commission is communicated in writing to the school and to the diocesan Department of Education.

- A. In the case where the school is granted full accreditation with comments, the notification will contain the comments the school is to consider.
- B. In the case where the school is granted accreditation with conditions, the notification shall indicate the corrective action which the school is required to take to pursue full accreditation.
- C. In the case where the school is not approved for accreditation, the notification shall direct the school with the corrective action required to pursue accreditation. The Director shall notify the school of its right to appeal and the procedures for appeal. The final decisions rest with the Commission.

### **V. Advancing from Accreditation with Conditions to Full Accreditation**

If a school receives accreditation with conditions, it will be given a specific timeline (30 days) within which the school is to revise its School Improvement Plan.

- A. The school submits its plan for corrective action to the OCSAA Director.
- B. The Director reviews the plan and recommends to the Commission one of the following actions:
  - 1. that the school be granted full accreditation; or
  - 2. that the school not be approved for accreditation. This recommendation requires the Director to indicate the reasons for which accreditation should be denied.

### **VI. School's Progress Reports**

- A. At the end of Year 2 of the Plan and at the end of Year 4 of the Plan, the school shall submit a Progress Report. The Progress Report shall indicate the progress that the school has made on its Final School Improvement Plan, including any modifications that have been made to the Final School Improvement Plan (*Form 6.1 [Progress Report I] and 6.2 [Progress Report II]*).

## Chapter Six

### **VII. Evaluation by the Progress Review Committee of the OCSAA**

The Progress Review Committee of the OCSAA reviews the Progress Reports submitted and recommends to the OCSAA Commission one of the following actions:

- A. The school be granted full acceptance.
- B. The school be granted full acceptance with comments.
- C. The school be granted acceptance with conditions. This recommendation requires the Progress Review Committee to indicate the corrective action, and the timeline in which the corrective action must be completed, in order for the school to advance from acceptance with conditions to full acceptance.

### **VIII. Action by the Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association Commission**

Final responsibility for acceptance rests with the OCSAA Commission. Commission action ordinarily will occur at the regular meetings of the Commission.

#### **A. Schools recommended for full acceptance**

Director submits names to Commission for approval.

#### **B. Schools recommended for full acceptance with comments**

Director submits names of schools with comments for approval.

#### **C. Schools recommended for acceptance with conditions**

Director submits synopsis for each school. The Commission discusses each school and if there is agreement on conditional status, corrective action, and timeline, the Commission requests the Director to communicate this, in writing, to the school and to the appropriate diocesan Department of Education.

If there is not agreement, then a decision is made by majority vote of the Commission. The Superintendent of the diocese in which the school is located does not vote.

### **IX. Notification of the School and Diocesan Department of Education**

The decision of the Commission is communicated in writing to the school and to the diocesan Department of Education.

- A. In the case where the school is granted full acceptance with comments, notification will contain the comments the school is to consider.
- B. In the case where the school is granted acceptance with conditions, notification shall indicate the corrective action which the school is required to take to pursue full acceptance.
- C. In the case where the school is not approved for acceptance, notification shall direct the school with the corrective action required to pursue acceptance. The Director shall notify the school of its right to appeal and the procedures for appeal. The final decisions rest with the Commission.

## Chapter Six

### X. Advancing from Acceptance with Conditions to Full Acceptance

If a school receives acceptance with conditions, it will be given a specific timeline (30 days) within which the school is to revise its Progress Report.

- A. The school submits its revised Progress Report to the OCSAA Director.
- B. The Director reviews the revised report and recommends to the Commission one of the following actions:
  - 1. that the school be granted full acceptance; or
  - 2. that the school not be approved for acceptance. This recommendation requires the Director to indicate the reasons for which acceptance should be denied.

### XI. Action to be Taken if a School Fails to Submit a Progress Report

- A. **Step One** - The Director shall notify the Commission of any school that has failed to submit a Progress Report as required by OCSAA rules.
- B. **Step Two** - The Commission shall instruct the Director to send a warning to the school. The warning letter shall indicate that the school has thirty days to submit a Progress Report. The warning shall also inform the school that if the school does not submit a Progress Report within thirty days, the Commission shall consider changing the school's accreditation status to *accreditation with conditions*.
- C. **Step Three** - If the school submits a Progress Report within thirty days, the report shall be reviewed according to OCSAA Progress Review procedures.
- D. **Step Four** - If the school fails to submit an acceptable Progress Report within thirty days, the Commission shall vote to change the school's accreditation status to *accreditation with conditions*. The school then shall be given thirty days to submit a report indicating what progress has been made on the present *School Improvement Plan* and what modifications in the *School Improvement Plan* are needed in order to move the school forward. The Director shall notify the school that if the school does not submit an acceptable Progress Report within thirty days, the Commission shall consider revoking the school's accreditation.
- E. **Step Five** - If the school fails to submit an acceptable Progress Report as directed in Step Four, the Commission shall vote to revoke the school's accreditation.

### XII. Standard School Survey Annual Report

- A. Each year the school must complete the OCSAA Annual Verifications of Standards Report. This report verifies to the diocesan Department of Education, the OCSAA, and the Ohio Department of Education that the school is implementing all of the Operating Standards. This form is completed online via the Web Portal. The two components of this report are listed on the following page and include the following information for all employees (licensed and non-licensed): name (first, middle, last), birth-date, title or function, dates of most recent FBI and BCI background checks, license/certification/permit numbers, and religious education certification expiration date. Other information includes: dates of most recent fire and health and safety inspections, diocesan approved courses of study, accreditation dates school calendar and compliance with all other Operating Standards.

# Chapter Six

**Please complete the worksheet below for all teaching and non teaching staff including auxiliary services, custodial and administrative staff.**

1. Enter School Name and your school's 6 digit IRN. If your school has more than one IRN, a separate workbook must be done for each IRN.
2. Enter your personnel's first, middle and last name in the space provided.
3. Under A.K.A. enter any other name the certificate/licensure might also be under, such as a maiden surname or a nickname.
4. Enter the date of birth in the following format. MM/DD/YYYY.
5. Select the title or function of the person from the drop down menu that appears, on the right side of the cell, when you click on the cell. If an appropriate title is not provided, please enter the title manually.
6. Enter the date of most recent FBI and BCI check in the following format. MM/DD/YYYY.
7. Enter the state ID number found on the teaching certificate(s) issued by the state of Ohio - including Pupil Activity Permits and/or Teacher's Aide Permits. The format should look something like AA2-123-456.
8. Save the completed workbook.

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School IRN: 000000 **\*Required**

**Complete Legal Name**

First	Middle	Last	A.K.A.	Date of Birth	Title/Function	Date of Most Recent BCI	Date of Most Recent FBI	License/Certificate/Permit/Number	Expiration Date of Religious Education Certification

**Please complete the worksheet below.**

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School IRN: 000000 **\*Required**

Date:	Citations (Yes/No)
Most Recent Fire Inspection	
Most Recent Health and Safety Inspection	

Yes/No	If No, Please Explain
The School is Implementing a course of study that meets diocesan requirements for each subject taught	
The School is Compliant with All Other Operating Standards	

Date: (MM/YYYY)
List the Date of the the School's most Recent Accreditation

Yes/No	If No, Please Explain
The School is either Implementing the School Improvement Plan or is engaged in the School Self-Study	

Number of Days
Indicate the Number of Days of Student Instruction
Indicate the Number of Parent-Teacher Conference Days
Indicate the Number of Professional Development Days
Please Attach the School Calendar

## Chapter Six

### B. Action to be Taken if a School Does Not Meet the Operating Standards

1. **Step One** - Each OCSAA member school shall submit the Annual Standard School Survey Report, *Verification of Operating Standards* as part of the Catholic Conference. The report shall be submitted electronically by October 31.
2. **Step Two** - If a school answers "no" to any question listed in the *Verification of Operating Standards*, the school shall receive assistance from the diocesan Department of Education to remedy the situation by April 1.
3. **Step Three** - No later than April 1, the Director shall verify with the Superintendent the names of schools that are meeting all OCSAA Standards and those that are not. If the Superintendent verifies that a school is not meeting all OCSAA Standards, then:
4. **Step Four** - The Superintendent shall send a letter to the school indicating that the school has until May 15 to submit a plan of action to the OCSAA and the Superintendent for meeting all OCSAA Standards. The action plan cannot extend beyond August 31. If the school is fully accredited, then the Director also shall inform the school that if the school fails to submit an action plan by May 15 or if the school submits an action plan but fails to implement all OCSAA Standards by August 31, the Director shall recommend to the Commission that the school's accreditation status be changed to *accreditation with conditions*.
5. **Step Five** - No later than May 15, the Director shall verify with the Superintendent that the school has submitted an action plan.
6. **Step Six** - No later than August 31, the Director shall verify with the Superintendent that the school is implementing all OCSAA Standards.
7. **Step Seven** - If an accredited school fails to submit a plan of action by May 15, or if the school is not implementing all OCSAA Standards by August 31, then the Commission shall vote to change the school's accreditation status to *accreditation with conditions*. The Commission shall instruct the Director to notify the school that if the school does not implement all OCSAA Standards by August 31, the Commission shall consider revoking the school's accreditation.
8. **Step Eight** - No later than September 15, the Director shall verify with the Superintendent that the school is implementing all OCSAA Standards.
9. **Step Nine** - If the Superintendent verifies that an accredited school is not implementing all OCSAA Standards by September 15, the Commission shall vote to revoke the school's accreditation.
10. **Step Ten** - No later than September 30, the Director shall submit to the Ohio Department of Education the names of OCSAA schools that are meeting all OCSAA Standards and the names of schools that are not meeting all OCSAA Standards.

**Note:** *In accordance with Ohio Administrative Code, failure to implement state-approved Operating Standards may result in the Ohio Department of Education initiating efforts to revoke the school's charter.*

## *Chapter Six*

### **XIII. Appeals Procedure for Review, Progress Review and Annual Report**

If a school is not approved for accreditation or re-accreditation or its accreditation is revoked, representative(s) of the school are accorded the right to appear before the Appeals Committee.

The procedures to be followed are:

1. Within two (2) weeks of notification of revocation of accreditation or nonapproval for accreditation or re-accreditation, the school may request to have its representative(s) appear before the Appeals Committee. This request must be submitted in writing to the Director.
2. The Director will notify the representative(s) of time and place of the appeals hearing.
3. Following the appeals hearing, the Appeals Committee shall submit its recommendations, in writing, to the OCSAA Commission for consideration at the Commission's next regular meeting. The action of the OCSAA Commission on accreditation and membership, after any and all appeals have been heard, is final.

### **XIV. Renewal of Application**

**Beginning of Year 7** - The school shall repeat the steps of Phases One, Two and Three. The school shall begin the self-study with a review of its Final School Improvement Plan and Progress Reports from the previous accreditation cycle.

## Chapter Seven

### Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association Structure, Rules, Roles and Procedures\*

#### The Purpose of the Chapter:

1. To explain the structure, rules, roles, and procedures of the Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association.

#### I. Governance

- A. The Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association (OCSAA) shall be governed by the OCSAA Commission. The Commission shall be comprised of the Superintendents of Schools of the Ohio dioceses.
- B. The Commission shall appoint a chairperson annually.
- C. A Director shall be employed by the Catholic Conference of Ohio upon the recommendation of the OCSAA Commission.

#### II. Membership

- A. Membership in the association is available to any Catholic school in Ohio that is recognized by the Bishop of the diocese in which it is located and that pays the annual membership fee.
- B. Categories of Membership
  1. Full membership shall be granted to any member school that attains full accreditation status. The member school retains full membership as long as the school maintains full accreditation status. Full members shall apply for renewal of accreditation every six years.
  2. Associate membership shall be granted to any member school that has not yet attained full accreditation status. Ordinarily, a school shall not hold associate membership for more than five continuous years.
- C. Membership Status of a School Seeking a Charter
  1. Step One - The school applies to the OCSAA for membership in the OCSAA and for assistance in obtaining a letter of approval to operate from the Ohio Department of Education. The letter of approval is the first step in the process of obtaining a charter from the State Board of Education. The letter of approval is good for four years.
  2. Step Two - The school is given associate membership in the OCSAA for three years. The school shall be required to fully implement all OCSAA Standards when the school opens, except those standards which the school is given more time to implement (as specifically designated by the OCSAA and approved by the Ohio Department of Education).
  3. Step Three - No later than the third year of operation, the school begins the accreditation process with a self-study.

\* Applicable to Catholic schools in Ohio in: the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and Dioceses of Cleveland, Columbus, Steubenville, Toledo, and Youngstown and the Eastern Catholic Churches.

## *Chapter Seven*

### **III. Meetings of the OCSAA Commission**

- A. The OCSAA Commission shall meet on a regular basis. Meeting dates are set by the Chairperson of the Commission.
- B. In order to constitute a quorum for official business, it shall be necessary to have five (5) members of the Commission present and voting.

### **IV. Powers and Duties of the OCSAA Commission**

The OCSAA Commission shall:

- A. Establish priorities for the OCSAA office;
- B. Establish standing committees and assign ad hoc committees;
- C. Decide the accreditation status of each school that applies for accreditation or renewal of accreditation;
- D. Make final decisions regarding the approval of Progress Reports;
- E. Make final decisions regarding appeals made to the Commission through the Appeals Committee;
- F. Adopt policies for the Association;
- G. Make final decisions regarding accreditation standards, self-study processes, documents, and accrediting procedures;
- H. Establish annual dues and methods of payment;
- I. Approve the job description of the Director;
- J. Make recommendation to the Executive Director of the Catholic Conference of Ohio regarding the hiring and evaluation of the Director of the Association; and
- K. Approve the list of External Validation Team Chairpersons and the list of persons eligible to serve on the Appeals Committee.

### **V. Director of the Association**

The Director of the Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association (OCSAA) is hired by the Executive Director of the Catholic Conference of Ohio upon the recommendation of the OCSAA Commission. The Director is accountable to the Executive Director of the Catholic Conference of Ohio and the OCSAA Commission.

#### **A. Qualifications**

- 1. Member of the Catholic Church;
- 2. Minimum of three (3) years administrative experience in Catholic school education (e.g., building principal, diocesan Department of Education);
- 3. Minimal educational requirement: Master's degree in education or related field;
- 4. Knowledge of school evaluation processes;

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5. Good organizational skills (computer skills preferred);
6. Strong public relations skills; and
7. Strong writing skills.

### **B. Responsibilities**

1. Plan, organize, and direct the activities of the OCSAA;
2. Provide training in the accreditation process (including an understanding of standards, procedures, and documents) for:
  - a. Superintendents and diocesan Departments of Education;
  - b. Principals/Steering Committees;
  - c. Chairpersons for External Validation Teams;
  - d. Members of the Review Committee;
  - e. Members of the Progress Review Committee; and
  - f. Others as needed.
3. Develop accreditation materials; develop and process OCSAA documents;
4. Establish and maintain a database on the status of all member schools;
5. Maintain a computer file for each member school that applies for accreditation. This file includes:
  - a. The Report of the External Validation Team, as received from the team chairperson;
  - b. The Preliminary School Improvement Plan;
  - c. Self-Study Report;
  - d. The Final School Improvement Plan as received from the school;
  - e. Progress Report I;
  - f. Progress Report II; and
  - g. Application for Accreditation or for Renewal of Accreditation;
6. Provide all communication required for operation of the OCSAA;
7. Serve as executive secretary for the OCSAA Commission, the Review Committee, the Progress Review Committee, and other committees established by the OCSAA Commission;
8. Represent the OCSAA Commission before other agencies and groups (e.g., the Ohio dioceses and their schools, other accrediting associations);
9. Set up and operate the OCSAA office;
10. Keep informed regarding research on school evaluation and governmental matters affecting the OCSAA;
11. Establish and maintain a list of approved chairpersons for External Validation Teams and appoint chairpersons;
12. Review corrective action plans for schools which are granted accreditation with conditions and make recommendations to the OCSAA Commission;
13. Issue noncompliance warnings to schools when directed by the OCSAA Commission;

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14. Hear any appeal made to the Director by a school in advance of the Director's recommendation to the Commission that the school not be approved for accreditation or renewal of accreditation; and
15. Other responsibilities as determined by the Executive Director of the Catholic Conference of Ohio and the OCSAA Commission.

### **VI. External Validation Team Chairpersons**

External Validation Team chairpersons are appointed by the Director of the Association. They are selected from a list of chairpersons approved by the OCSAA Commission.

#### **A. Qualifications of chairpersons**

1. In order to serve as a chairperson of an External Validation Team, a person shall:
  - a. have received training sponsored by the OCSAA regarding current OCSAA Standards and procedures;
  - b. have prior experience as a member of an External Validation Team; and
  - c. have experience in educational administration.
2. A person may not serve as a chairperson of an External Validation Team if the person is an employee of a Catholic elementary or secondary school located in the same diocese as the school being evaluated.
3. No one shall serve as chairperson for more than one External Validation Team Visit in a single school year.
4. These requirements may be waived by the Director of the Association in consultation with the diocesan Superintendent.

#### **B. The approved list of External Validation Team chairpersons**

1. Annually, by May 1, each diocesan Department of Education submits to the Director of the OCSAA, a list of candidates who are qualified and available to serve as chairpersons of External Validation Teams.
2. Each diocesan Department of Education must submit a number of candidates that is equal to or greater than 20 percent of the total number of schools in that diocese.
3. The Director of the Association submits the list of candidates for chairpersons to the OCSAA Commission for approval.

### **VII. Committees of the OCSAA**

#### **A. Advisory Committee**

1. The committee consists of at least one person from each diocese chaired by the Director.
2. The Superintendent of each diocese appoints members to the OCSAA Advisory Committee.

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3. The Advisory Committee member shall:
  - a. Be accountable to the Commission, and
  - b. Serve in an advisory capacity to the Director.
- B. Review Committee
  1. The Review Committee consists of at least twelve (12) persons: two (2) persons appointed by the Superintendent of Schools of each Ohio diocese. Ordinarily, members of the Review Committee serve for three (3) years. The Review Committee shall meet at least three times a year.
  2. The duties of the Review Committee are to review the Preliminary and Final School Improvement Plans, and the reports of the External Validation Team and make recommendations to the OCSAA Commission regarding the accreditation status of schools.
- C. Ad Hoc Committees
  1. Appeals Committee
    - a. The Appeals Committee shall consist of the Director plus two (2) persons selected from a list of persons approved by the OCSAA Commission. The school making the appeal shall select one representative from the approved list and the Director shall select one representative from approved list. Neither representative shall be from the diocese in which the school making the appeal is located.
    - b. The duties of the Appeals Committee are to hear appeals submitted by member schools whose accreditation has been revoked or who have not been approved for accreditation or reaccreditation, and to make recommendations regarding those appeals to the OCSAA Commission.
  2. Other committees as needed

### VIII. Committee Procedures

- A. The Review Committee
  1. The Review Committee of the OCSAA reviews the reports submitted and recommends to the OCSAA Commission one of the following actions:
    - a. that the school be granted full accreditation;
    - b. that the school be granted full accreditation with comments; or
    - c. that the school be granted accreditation with conditions. This recommendation requires the Review Committee to indicate the corrective action and the timeline in which the corrective action must be completed in order for the school to advance from accreditation with conditions to full accreditation.

**Note:** A school that cannot verify that it is implementing all OCSAA Standards cannot proceed toward accreditation or re-accreditation until the requirement is satisfied. The Review Committee will not review the school's report until all OCSAA Standards have been met.

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2. Review Committee Procedures
  - a. The Director gathers and organizes materials from each school for review.
  - b. No member is assigned to read materials for schools from his/her own diocese or any school in which he/she has served as a chairperson for the External Validation Team Visit.
  - c. Two readers are assigned to read a school's materials.

The assigned readers meet together for each school and follow the process described below:

    - i. If both readers recommend "full accreditation", the Director indicates on the review sheets "full accreditation".
    - ii. If both readers recommend "full accreditation with comments", the Director indicates on the review sheets "full accreditation with comments". The readers need to write any comments they want the school to consider.
    - iii. If both readers recommend "accreditation with conditions", the Director indicates on the review sheets "accreditation with conditions". The Director notifies the readers that they need to meet to develop a corrective action plan.
    - iv. If the readers disagree on the accreditation status of the school, the Director instructs them to meet to attempt to reach consensus. If consensus is reached, the process continues based on the above. If the readers cannot reach consensus, they notify the Director and the Director appoints a third reader. The recommendation for accreditation is based on the majority opinion of the three readers. The process continues based on the above.
    - v. All materials are returned to the Director.
    - vi. All recommendations are forwarded to the OCSAA Commission.
    - vii. All proceedings of the OCSAA Review Committee are to remain confidential.