

Getting Organized

Preparing for Self-Study

What will you learn from this module?



- How to organize for self-study.
- Roles and responsibilities of the key players.
- Who your stakeholders are.
- Possible organizational structures for completing the self-study.
- How to communicate your progress to your school community.

Getting Started

- Typically the self-study process is led by Internal Coordinators who work with a Planning Team composed of representative stakeholders.
- The Principal/Head of School guides the selection of these key players in the self-study process.
- These individuals should be appointed or selected based on their interest, their role in the organization, and/or their special expertise.

Role of the Internal Coordinators

[Sample Job Description can be found in "Accreditation Resources" on website](#)

- Coordinate and communicate the components of the Self-Study.
- Facilitate the work of the Planning Team.
- Oversee planning and preparation for the Team Visit.
- Provide the energy, enthusiasm, and expertise to move the process forward.
- Serve for a pre-determined length of time.

MSA-CESS recommends appointing at least two Internal Coordinators.

The Planning Team

Sample Planning Team Compositions can be found in “Accreditation Resources” on website

- Cross section representation of school community of *stakeholders*.
- Team size depends on a variety of factors .



Who are *Stakeholders*?

Individuals or groups that have a vested interest in the future of the school.



Who are *Stakeholders*?

- Administration
- Faculty & Professional Staff
- Support Staff
- Students
- Advisory Board
- Governing Body
- Parents/Families
- Local Government Officials
- Community/ Business Partners
- Alumni
- Other (according to context of the school)

Choose Stakeholders Strategically!

Choose stakeholders who are engaged in your school and have a strong interest in its success. This **promotes cohesion** among school community members and **provides support** for continuous school improvement.



Role of the Planning Team

[Sample Job Description can be found in “Accreditation Resources” on website](#)

- Completes the self-study template.
 - Contributes to developing/reviewing/revising the school’s Foundation Documents [Mission, Beliefs, Profile of Graduates].
 - Gathers information about the school and student performance.
 - Communicates with stakeholders and solicits input, including standards surveys.
 - Oversees the development of objectives and the school improvement plan.

Role of the Planning Team

[Sample Job Description can be found in "Accreditation Resources" on website](#)

Planning Team remains intact after Team Visit to oversee implementation of the Plan for Growth and Improvement [the school's chosen objectives and action plans].

- Conduct Periodic Reviews of the Plan.
 - Analysis of progress
 - Review and Revise Action Plans as needed
 - Maintain communication and awareness activities
- *Periodic Review Template available in "Accreditation Resources" on website

Planning Team Operation

The Team:

- sets meeting schedules and agendas.
- maintains minutes from meetings.
- sets terms of membership and plans for succession.
- makes decisions by consensus.

A key characteristic of a successful Planning Team is that all voices are equal.

Role of the School Leadership

- Serves as a member of the Planning Team.
- Is “one voice among equals”.
- Supports and facilitates the self-study process.
 - Assures necessary resources are available.
- Champions the Plan for Growth and Improvement.

Role of the Governance

- May serve on Planning Team.
- Approves and supports the accreditation process.
- Knowledgeable about the Plan for Growth and Improvement.
- Integrates Plan for Growth and Improvement into school/system strategic plan.

Possible Structures for Getting the Work Done

The Planning Team may create/use:

- Committees for Standards.
- Committees for Descriptive Summaries.
- Committees for Curricular Areas.
- Action Teams.
- Implementation Teams.
- External Facilitator.

*** Full descriptions of these options are explained at the *Organizing for Self-Study* workshop.**

Plan for Communication and Awareness

- How will the Planning Team keep stakeholders informed of the self-study process and implementation of the school improvement plan?
 - Website
 - Newsletter
 - Social Media
 - Presentations
 - Press Releases
 - Community social gatherings
 - Surveying





2 Keys for success:

- **Attend an Organizing for Self-Study workshop.**
 - These workshops are offered free of charge at the MSA Office in Philadelphia and other regional sites. For a full list of workshops please visit www.msa-cess.org.
- **Nominate members of your Planning Team to serve on MSA Visiting Teams to other schools**
 - Our volunteers tell us this is the best way to prepare for your own visit.
 - You can do this by updating the Volunteer section of your school's profile on the MSA-CESS website or contacting volunteer services [Irene Raatzs, iraatzs@msa-cess.org].

Summary

The purpose of this module was to explain how to organize for the self-study process and to identify the key players.

At this point you should understand:

- How to select the key players in the self-study process.
- Roles and responsibilities of the Internal Coordinators, the Planning Team, the school leadership and the school governance.
- Who your stakeholders are, how to engage them, and how to keep them apprised of progress.
- Possible ways of organizing to complete the self-study

**The full sequence of training modules are available at
www.msa-cess.org**

Starting the Accreditation Process

Steps to Accreditation

Selection of Protocol

Getting Started

Foundation Documents

Self Assessment of Standards

Self Assessment of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessments

Improvement Planning – Objectives

Improvement Planning – Action Plans

Preparing and Hosting a Visiting Team

After the Visit