

Self Assessment of the MSA-CESS Standards

Measuring your School's Organizational Capacity

What will you learn from this module?



- What the Standards for Accreditation are.
- Why the Standards are important.
- How to self-assess your school's adherence to the Standards.

What are the Standards for Accreditation

- The Middle States Standards for Accreditation are qualitative statements that reflect research-based best practices for schools.
- The Standards serve as the primary basis upon which the Commissions make accreditation decisions.

To be accredited a school must meet the 12 Middle States Standards for Accreditation.

What are the Standards for Accreditation?

1. Mission
2. Governance and Leadership
3. School Improvement Planning
4. Finances
5. Facilities
6. School Staff and Organization
7. Health and Safety
8. Educational Program
9. Assessment and Evidence of Student Learning
10. Student Services
11. Student Life and Student Activities
12. Information Resources

How are the Standards presented in the self-study?

- Although the Standards are presented in different formats in each self-study template, the content and requirements are consistent through each protocol.
- Remember: All schools must meet the 12 Standards for Accreditation, regardless of protocol choice.

How are the templates different?

- In *Designing Our Future*, the Standards are embedded in various Descriptive Summaries which include data, questions, and self assessment of specific Standards related to a particular topic (For example the Descriptive Summary of School Leadership and Organization houses the Standards of Governance and Leadership and School Organization and Staff).
- In *Excellence By Design* the Standards are together in one section entitled the Profile of Organizational Capacity.

Structure of the Self Assessment in Self-Study Templates

- **A - Issues Related to the Standard**
 - Data related to adherence to the standard
- **B - Adherence to the Indicators of Quality**
 - Results from surveys related to the individual indicators
- **C - Self-assessment of adherence to the Standards**
 - The school's determination that it meets the requirements of the standard
- **D - Implications for Planning**
 - Listing of strengths and weaknesses in relation to the standard
- **E - Evidence**
 - Specific evidence in relation to the standard that the visiting team will be looking for

Self assessment of the Standards

- Within the self-study process, the self assessment of the Standards determines a baseline of the school's current organizational capacity and ultimately guides the school in determining priorities for improvement.
- This self assessment can be accomplished by committees, completion of the Standards Surveys, or a combination of the two.

Middle States Standards Surveys

- MSA provides surveys for assessing each Standard and Indicator through Survey Monkey.
- There are three surveys available
 - Staff – most inclusive (includes each indicator).
 - Parents/Community Members – specific indicators.
 - Student – specific indicators.
- These surveys are available in English and Spanish.

Contact the MSA office to have the surveys copied into your school's Survey Monkey account.

Who should complete the surveys?

- All Staff/Administrators – the Planning Team should facilitate a way to ensure that all faculty complete the surveys.
- Students – As many as is practical
- Parents – As many as is practical
- Other:
 - Board Members
 - Community Stakeholders

Using Committees

- There are several possibilities for the use of committees in the self assessment of the Standards:
 - Planning Team analyzes results.
 - Committee per standard which reports out to the Planning Team.
 - Several Committees could be responsible for multiple Standards.
- Utilize focus groups. Those most knowledgeable about a standard should make the final assessment. i.e. – the business office should work on the Finance Standard.
- Committees may self assess the standards through alternate means, however the vast majority utilize the surveys.
- Planning Team/Committees will complete sections A through E of each Standards section of the Self-Study Template.

What do we do with the results?

- The Planning Team or Committee:
 - Aggregate survey results or summarize committee feedback.
 - Input results into respective template sections (Standards Section B in the Self-Study Template).
 - Analyze comments from surveys or committees.
 - Input comments into template (Standards Section B in the Self-Study Template).
- Determine if the school meets each Standard (Standards Section C in the Self-Study Template).

Implications for Planning

- Using the data results, complete Section D (Implications for Planning) in the Self-Study Template for each Standard.
- Decide what actions could be taken immediately and rectify concerns (There is no need to wait if you discover issues that can be rectified immediately).
- Determine what long term actions should transfer into the school's Growth and Improvement Plan.

Evidence to Support Your Findings

- Each Standard section has a list of recommended evidence to support your findings.
- It is the role of the Planning Team/Committees to physically (or electronically) assemble these documents for review by the Visiting Team when on site at the school.
- The evidence collected should be listed in the Section E of the Self-Study Template.



- The quality of the responses to the surveys is more important than the quantity of the responses.
- Even negative results from the surveys can be used as an opportunity for improvement.
- The more accurate you are in the self-reflection, the more you will get out of the process.

Summary

The purpose of this module was to prepare you to begin the self assessment of the 12 MSA-CESS Standards

At this point you should be ready to:

- Distribute Standards surveys and/or organize Standards committees.
- Analyze surveys and/or Standards committee assessments.
- Plan the school's improvement using the survey results.

**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