

## **Focus on Learning: WASC/CDE Process Guide for School Library Programs 2020 revision**

The WASC accreditation process is a powerful stimulus for schools to re-examine or define their goals and objectives. It is an opportunity to look introspectively at the instructional program of the school and to write descriptions that emphasize both accomplishments and the need for change.

Reporting on the school library program in the WASC assessment document can become an opportunity for leadership and program promotion as library personnel become informed and active participants in the local self-study program. Their task is to define a quality library program that is integral to local curriculum development and implementation. These materials are designed to assist in the accomplishment of this task.

The title of the current document for accreditation of high schools is *Focus on Learning* (FoL). Its aim is to foster program improvement, and is based on a process that involves the entire school staff in identifying Schoolwide Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Its organizational design is focused around three types of groups or teams: Leadership Team, Home Groups (stakeholder groups organized by roles/responsibilities), and Focus Groups (interdisciplinary groups of stakeholders).

This brochure is intended to guide teacher librarians, administrators, and others as they use the *Focus on Learning* document to interpret, assess and develop the library program.

### **Tips:**

- Copies of *Focus on Learning* should be available in the library.
- Read the entire document carefully.
- Highlight items that are impacted by or have potential impact for the library program.
- Highlight phrases and items relevant to the library program (e.g., resources, technology, critical thinking, problem solving, lifelong learning, etc.). Each of these highlighted items should be addressed in the self-study.
- Include statements about the library program and facility throughout the report.
- Include a separate "Status of the Library" report using the Model School Library Standards as an evaluation rubric.
- Refer to California's Education Code, state and national school library standards, and district guidelines to justify the school library's role in contributing to the school's accreditation.

## I. Leadership Team

The Leadership Team includes chairs and other important representatives from all school-wide focus groups. It is essential that the teacher librarian participate on the Leadership Team.

## II. Home Groups

Schoolwide focus groups include representatives from most, if not all, home groups. Every staff member serves on a focus group, including all school library workers. Teacher librarians should consider participating in more than one focus group. Focus groups will address the following five criteria dealing with curriculum.

- A. Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources
- B. Standards-based Student Learning: Curriculum
- C. Standards-based Student Learning: Instruction
- D. Standards-based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability
- E. School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth

Some focus groups may address more than one criteria category, depending on the size of school staff, number of criteria in each category, number of relevant SLOs for each category, or number of members in the focus group.

Rationale and perspective for the role of the teacher librarian are provided for each focus group below.

### **A. Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, and Qualified Staff and Resources**

The school-wide mission statement should include reference to the importance of information, digital or media literacy and problem solving, Sample statements might read:

- “Ensure students and teachers are effective users of ideas and information.”
- “The purpose of school is to help students learn to use their minds well.”

A statement of the library’s mission and vision should include:

- “The School library is central to the nurture of learning.”

Teacher librarians should be involved in leadership and decision-making because they, and other qualified library staff promote achievement of academic standards and the SLOs.

**B. Standards-based Student Learning: Curriculum**

**B1. Rigorous and Relevant Standards Based Curriculum**

**B2. Access to Curriculum**

The role of teacher librarians in helping to deliver a rigorous and relevant standards-based curriculum is necessary in order to provide access to materials and resources that integrate subject areas by implementing best practices in research and accountability. Refer to FoL criteria for these focus groups. The teacher librarians' involvement in delivering a rigorous and relevant standards based curriculum and how the library standards are taught is based on current educational research regarding the role of teacher librarians and how they prepare students for college, career and life. Observations should include the extent to which all students have access to the library's curriculum integrated into a student learning plan, and how it helps students prepare themselves to achieve their academic, personal and career goals. Documentation should provide numerous instances of access to the library standards, the library's curriculum, and how this teaching occurs. Evidence might include:

- Teacher librarians presenting multiple perspectives on various topics utilizing a variety of print and electronic sources as defined by current educational research that prepares students for college, careers and life.
- Teacher librarians presenting and integrating library standards within all other subject areas from multiple perspectives/biases, utilizing materials that reflect a variety of print and electronic sources as defined by academic and college and career readiness standards.
- The school library program providing congruent information between concepts with the integration of library standards for students on all curricular paths reflecting library skills taught and academic, college and technical disciplines that reflect expected schoolwide learning results for all students.
- The school library program as the provider of multiple sources for integrating library standards across academic disciplines and college/career standards with integrity, reliability and security.
- Students routinely integrating a variety of library materials and sources into their learning and engage in learning experiences beyond the textbook and classroom.

- Students having 24/7 access to a wide range of learning materials to strengthen their real world problem solving skills and to conduct in-depth library research by using databases, online networks, and primary source documents to access information beyond the classroom with vertical articulation among grade levels.
- Students having access to the library program through teacher librarians, integrating its resources and services within their current educational options, including career exploration, preparation for post-secondary education and pre-technical training.
- Students accessing all curriculum, including the library's curriculum and standards, that are rigorous, relevant and coherent with exposure to real world application,
- Students, staff and parents collaborating to develop, and moderate library curriculum that supports the students' educational goals, including transitioning to a college, a career or other post-secondary options; and the school community evaluating the effectiveness of collaboration efforts.

## **C. Standards-based Student Learning: Instruction**

### **C1. Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences**

### **C2. Student Engagement**

The role of teacher librarians in helping to deliver a rigorous and relevant standards-based curriculum is necessary for integrating resources within instruction that uses best practices based on research and accountability. Refer to FoL criteria for these focus groups. The teacher librarians' involvement in instructing a rigorous and relevant standards-based curriculum is based on current educational research regarding the role of teacher librarians and how they prepare students for college, career and life. Observation of library instruction should include challenging and relevant learning experiences that prepare students for college and career readiness. The school should observe a variety of strategies and resources used, including technology and experiences beyond the textbook and classroom, that employ higher order thinking skills for success. Teacher librarians should engage students, provide challenging and relevant learning experiences, and instruct students in the essentials of research. Evidence might include:

- Teacher librarians instructing students based on the library curriculum, that involves challenging and relevant work as evidenced by observation and examination of student work.

- Teacher librarians instructing students through the school library program providing information for students at all performance levels and for all curricular paths.
- Teacher librarians presenting strategies for analyzing topics from multiple perspectives with differentiated instruction that reflects use of multiple print (e.g., books, magazines, newspapers, images), online (e.g., mass media, social media news, databases), and other electronic resources (e.g., video, podcasts) in addition to evaluating their impact on teaching and student learning.
- Teacher librarians providing research-based instruction and professional development for the school community using multiple resources in a variety of formats, enhancing integrated personal achievement of expected school-wide learning results.
- Teacher librarians coach students in the use of a variety of library resources for learning and engaging in experiences beyond the textbook and the classroom.
- Teacher librarians instructing and apply their knowledge through a wide range of resources that strengthens their real world problem solving strategies in conducting in-depth library research. Students are instructed in, and can demonstrate, the application of higher order thinking and problem solving skills within a variety of instructional settings. Teacher librarians routinely instruct students in the strategic access and use of technology and other resources including databases, online networks, and primary source documents beyond the textbook and classroom setting.
- Students accessing real world experiences and are engaged in career preparation activities that are available through the library.

#### **D. Standards-based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability**

##### **D1. Using Assessment to Analyze and Report Student Progress**

##### **D2. Using Assessment to Monitor and Modify Learning in the Classroom**

##### **D3. Using Assessment to Monitor and Modify the Program Schoolwide**

The teacher librarians' involvement in the assessment and accountability of standards-based curriculum is based on current educational research regarding the role of teacher librarians and how they prepare students for college, career and life. Library instruction in conjunction with the content teacher should include a comprehensive assessment and reporting criteria

of library skills as they apply to relevant learning experiences that prepare students for college and career readiness. The school should report on the variety of strategies and resources used in the library's curriculum and what their students' progress is toward library research competencies that include technology and higher order thinking skills. Those assessments also should be used to monitor and modify learning of library skills as integrated throughout learning in the classroom. Additionally, monitoring and assessing library skills should be used to modify the overall library program within the school. Numerous examples should be given that reflect how teacher librarians use assessments and accountability with students, and how those assessments lend themselves to relevant learning experiences, as well as instruct students in the essentials of research. Evidence might include:

The research process relevant to performance-based assessment:

- The research process is a performance, and the staff uses effective assessment processes to collect, disaggregate, analyze and report student performance data.
- Both the process and the product of research are assessed.
- The research process is applicable as either a portfolio or an authentic assessment model, and the school informs district, parents and board members about the progress toward achieving academic and library standards including college and career readiness through the schoolwide learner outcomes.
- Researchers, content teachers, and teacher librarians are involved in assessment and in developing assessment and accountability tools that monitor all students' growth toward meeting academic and library standards. This includes a sound basis upon which student grades are monitored and determined.

Resources, services, activities and programs of the school library are designed to integrate a variety of assessment strategies.

- Teacher librarians consistently use appropriate formative and summative strategies to measure student progress, and analyze those assessments to guide, modify and adjust their curricular and instructional approaches within the collaborative classroom model.
- Students give feedback and are interviewed as to the degree to which their learning experiences in the library, and within the collaborative classroom model, are understood and relevant to preparing themselves for college, careers and life.

Assessment of academic SLOs within the library standards should drive the school library program and its development in assessing and monitoring student progress that involve all stakeholders, i.e., students, parents, district and community.

- Stakeholders are involved in assessing and monitoring the processes in the school library.

- The school regularly examines and analyzes standards-based curriculum, and embedded-standardized assessments, including the library program for all English language students, as well as all other subject areas.

Assessment of the school's library program should reflect the following student competencies:

- Student as a gatherer of information.
- Student as an evaluator of information
- Student as a user/consumer of information.
- Student as a producer of information.

Schoolwide modifications are based on assessment results to make changes to the school and library program on a continuing basis. This includes professional development activities and resource allocations for the library that demonstrate a results-driven reflection as a continuous process. The school and library periodically assess their curriculum and instructional practices through a continuous evaluation process. There is adequate diversification of the assessment process to ensure its integrity.

## **E. School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth**

### **E1. Parent and Community Engagement Criterion**

### **E2. School Environment**

### **E3. Personal and Academic Student Support**

The role of teacher librarians in delivering rigorous and relevant standards-based instruction that reflects school culture and a student's personal and academic growth is essential. Teacher librarians should be involved with parents and the community in developing and employing this criterion. Library instruction within the school environment should be integrated throughout personal and academic growth preparing students for life after secondary graduation. The school should report on the variety of strategies and library resources used throughout the curriculum that provide for personal and academic growth. Those criteria also should be used to incorporate the learning of library skills as necessary for lifelong learning. Examples should demonstrate how teacher librarians track academic growth toward personal success. Evidence might include:

- Teacher librarians regularly implementing strategies and processes for involving the community as active partners in teaching and learning library skills. These strategies should also include the non-English speaking, special needs and online students of the community.
- The school using business, industry and community resources through the space in the library. The library sponsoring and being available for

presentations in the library that promote guest speakers, partnerships and local employers in conjunction with student projects and classroom presentations.

- That the school library is a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning and teaches internet safety. The library is a place that is characterized by trust, professionalism, and high expectations for all students and focuses on continuous school and library improvement.
- School library workers and the school library program providing essential integration of students' personal and academic growth.
- The school library workers demonstrating caring and concern with high expectations for all students as well as being a nurturing environment that honors differences, and is conducive to learning.
- The school library having available adequate and appropriate academic assistance with interventions to integrate students with special talents and/or needs, giving students access to a system of personalized services, activities and opportunities that help ensure school, college and/or career success.
- The school library having existing policies and regulations pertaining to a safe, acceptable and nurturing learning environment.
- The school library having an adequate allocation of library funding resources to support library services in order to integrate and demonstrate direct connections between academic standards and library standards as they pertain to college and career readiness standards and schoolwide learner outcomes.
- Strategies being used by the library staff, school leadership and other staff to develop and implement personalized approaches to learning that allow access to and progress through rigorous standards including the library standards and other academic areas of the curriculum. Students are receiving a curriculum that promotes inclusion, is set up for regular review, includes a process for review, and includes procedures that allow for interventions to address retention and redirection of student learning of library skills.
- School leadership including the library when providing services that have a direct relationship for all students (i.e., GATE, ELL, special needs, etc.) regarding the involvement of learning in and out of the classroom.
- Library services being included as part of a rigorous, equitable and challenging curriculum across all academic areas and beyond the school day.



- Library services being included when standards and schoolwide learner outcomes are regularly evaluated as they pertain to academic, library, and career readiness standards supporting lifelong learning.

### III. Focus Groups

The following are identified:

- A. Discipline specific committees include all certificated personnel in a designated subject area
- B. Support staff groups are identified as those “that contribute to the success of all students.” This includes school library workers, and parent library volunteers.
- C. Students and parents are represented as home groups.

### IV. Expected Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

SLOs are what students should know, and be able to do and understand by graduation. SLOs are more specific than the mission statement; one must be able to show evidence for each SLO. Teacher librarians ensure that library-focused SLOs are included. Sample statements might include:

- “Students will be able to access, evaluate, and use information from a variety of resources to meet personal and curricular needs.”
- “Students will develop skills necessary to function in our constantly changing technological society.”
- “Students will be lifelong learners who think critically, access, analyze and apply information to solve problems.”

### V. Standards

California school library programs are guided by the *Model School Library Standards for California Public Schools*, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) *National School Library Standards*, the International Society for Technology in Education *Standards for Students* and *Standards for Educators*, and FoL. These standards can be used for the school library program and the discussion of school-wide standards. Both sets of standards include specific indicators to measure library program quality.

- The state standards assert that learners should be able to access, evaluate, and use information; and integrate information literacy skills into all areas of learning.
- The national standards assert that learners should be able to think critically; create and share knowledge; and pursue personal and aesthetic growth.

## VI. Rubrics

The rubrics describe varying levels of performance for meeting the concepts of each of the school-wide criteria. Items relevant to the school library program are embedded throughout the rubrics for each criterion.

It is therefore advisable to allow for separate written statements from each focus group highlighting/emphasizing how the school library program addresses the criteria in that area of focus. ***All groups will welcome your input.*** This is an opportunity to ensure that the quality of the school library program is represented in the final report/document/self-study report in a quantitative manner. Read all rubrics carefully.

Both the California Model School Library Standards and the AASL Standards include valuable rubrics. The one from the California Model School Library Standards has been included in this document as an example.

## VII. Criteria Guide Questions for Discussion and Evidence Analysis

To be used for discussion and evidence analysis by all Home and Focus Groups. Note that the rationale and perspective for the role of the teacher librarian listed for each focus group form the basis of guiding questions. The following questions are keyed to specific target groups.

### A. Criteria Guide Questions for Home Groups or Curricular Disciplines

In addition to the questions for service integration, it is essential to develop discussion questions for each criterion and assist each home group in recognizing the role of the school library program as departments consider or focus on questions for their curricular area.

### B. Criteria Guide Questions for Library Support Services

Questions identified for services are relevant and essential for focusing on the school library program as a key element in supporting the achievement of academic standards and SLOs for all students.

### C. Criteria Guide Questions for Students and Parents

Suggest that your school consider adding questions for students and parents to include items specific to the school library program. The questions informed by FoL for student interviews should be relevant to the school library program, and students will be asked these questions by the visiting committee team.

## VIII. Evidence

Invite at least one member of the visiting team to visit the school library to see evidence of the school community in action. Products of students' learning through school library resources and programs should be evident in all classrooms and in the library, as described in the above indicators.

Ideally, standards-based data about the school library program and its impact on student achievement and school improvement should be collected and analyzed as baseline data, with the process repeated regularly (at least yearly) to determine what changes have occurred in order to act upon them as part of an effort of continuous improvement. Data should also be disaggregated by relevant groupings (e.g., grade level, academic subject, gender, ethnicity, English language learners, special needs/exceptionalities, feeder school) in order to uncover possible opportunity or achievement gaps that need to be addressed. At the same time, student privacy and confidentiality must be ensured.

Evidence must be obvious and accessible. Observable evidence includes:

- Observation of information behaviors of students and staff
- Content analysis of student and staff products and presentations
- Interviews, focus groups, and observations of students, staff, and parents
- Collection quality (e.g., quantity, currency, authoritativeness, appropriateness, appearance, accessibility) and use
- Other assessment tools (e.g., library schedule, circulation records, meeting and event documents, website analytics, staffing patterns, surveys, grades, anecdotes).

## Process Data

In addition to demographic and outcome data, collecting and analyzing process data based on state and national library standards strengthens the Focus on Learning process. The chart below outlines possible kinds of process data that can be collected and later analyzed in home (stakeholder) and focus groups.

### *Collaboration and Trust*

- Encouraging open communication
- Sharing decision-making
- Practicing and supporting cooperation
- Supporting and informing teachers and other school staff
- Practicing respectful, responsible and ethical behavior

### *Instruction*

- Evidence of sound instructional design and strategies
- Evidence of challenging, relevant instruction
- Integration of vocational, academic and social content
- Appropriate accommodations for different groups and individuals
- Evidence of appropriate assessment and continuous improvement
- Consistency and articulation across grade levels, courses and subject matter
- Amount of time allocated to specific instructional practices
- Linkage of classroom learning to experiences outside the classroom
- Support for teacher collaboration

### *Instructional Resources*

- Use of a variety of resources, such as books, audio-visual materials, digital resources, online resources such as databases, manipulatives, equipment, supplies, etc.)
- Organization, access, retrieval, and circulation of resources
- Accessibility for all students

### *Resources*

- Instructional resources (see above)
- Availability and use of library policies, procedures, communication, planning, and assessment resources
- Adequacy and allocation of financial resources
- Use and adequacy of facilities
- Staffing (e.g., quantity, qualifications, performance, products)

## IX. Action Plan

The action plan addresses the major areas for growth identified by the self-study. The action plan should emphasize the development and implementation of evaluation strategies to assess achievement of the SLOs and academic standards for all students, as detailed above.

## X. Resources

Review FoL key terminology for definitions of terms. Review FoL lists of resources; it is highly recommended that these resources be acquired and made accessible to the school community in the school library.

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### Background Reading

Readers of this brochure should be familiar with the following publications:

*Model School Library Standards for California Public Schools*. 2010. California Department of Education. Call 916-445-1260 to order, or go to <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/lb/schoollibstnds2017.asp>

*Focus on Learning- Joint WASC/CDE Process Guide*. 2018. Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Schools, 533 Airport Blvd., Suite 200, Burlingame, CA 94050. Call 650-696-1060, or go to <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/wascsummary.asp>

*National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*. 2018. American Association of School Libraries. Call 800-545-2433, or order online at [www.alastore.ala.org](http://www.alastore.ala.org)

*Standards for Students*. 2016. International Society for Technology in Education. <https://www.iste.org/standards/for-students>

*Standards for Educators*. 2017. International Society for Technology in Education. <https://www.iste.org/standards/for-educators>

This brochure was prepared by a task group of teacher librarians in collaboration with the California School Library Association Committee on Standards Integration

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### Glossary

Digital Citizenship: the ability and habit to use technology safely, critically, productively, responsibly, and civically

Digital Literacy: the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information requiring both cognitive and technical skills

Information Literacy: the ability to locate, access, evaluate, use, manage, generate and communicate information effectively and responsibly

Leadership Team: a group of decision-makers and influencers who are stakeholders in the school library program

School Library Program: a systematic learning environment of educational resources and services coordinated by a teacher librarian, which supports the school community

School Library Workers: all paid and unpaid adult personnel who work in the library; a full-time teacher librarian and full-time paraprofessional should staff the library, and additional paid and volunteer adults can support the library program

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): what students should know, and be able to understand and do by graduation

Teacher Librarian: state-credentialed librarian who works in PK-adult school settings; teacher librarians have both an initial teaching credential and a teacher librarian services credential

- CSLA Questions:

- o What are the next steps in sharing the committee's work?

Upon approval Lesley will create supporting documents (e.g., PPT, newsletter article), and contact SoCal WASC personnel to initiate WAS approval and use through training for implementation. The documents can also be used to train CSLA members (done by CSLA's CSI), and the CSLA Board can encourage them to get involved in WASC.

- o What is the functionality and accountability of the document?

The document functions as a guideline to help school communities address school library programs as they develop their self study for accreditation. This document updates the parallel 2003 WASC guidelines for TLs.

- o What are the teeth in it? Will our school districts take notice of it? How is the WASC team going to make sure that it is a priority? Upon approval Lesley will create supporting documents (e.g., PPT, newsletter article), and contact SoCal WASC personnel to initiate WAS approval and use through training for implementation. The documents can also be used to train CSLA members (done by CSLA's CSI), and the CSLA Board can encourage them to get involved in WASC. This document updates the parallel 2003 WASC guidelines for TLs.

- o Is it possible for an IB school without a TL to still get approval? What about elementary IB schools?

That decision is up to WASC.

- o Is there a revised date on the document?

yes

- o How will it be shared with our members and in the wider community?

Upon approval Lesley will create supporting documents (e.g., PPT, newsletter article), and contact SoCal WASC personnel to initiate WAS approval and use through training for implementation. The documents can also be used to train CSLA members (done by CSLA's CSI), and the CSLA Board can encourage them to get involved in WASC.