AIAASC K-12 ACCREDITATION

STANDARDS & INDICATORS

AIAAsc

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION
ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

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ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

The school has developed a vision and mission for the future of its students that includes a view of the globalized society that the students will enter.

The vision and mission are rooted in a regard for the common good of all stakeholders and demonstrate the school's respect for all ethnicities, creeds, and cultures. The values, goals, and aspirations expressed in the mission guide the school in its operational and instructional decision-making, along with its strategic planning.

Indicators:

1.1   World Vision

The school's vision is a collective expression of the school community's ethos and aspirations and reflects the globalized society its students will encounter. The vision statement is concise, easy to recall, and is used to guide the mission of the school.

1.2   Mission Statement

The school has developed a concise mission statement that reflects its vision while serving the needs of its students. It provides an overview of how the school will achieve the fundamental goals and aspirations described in the vision statement. The goals expressed in the mission statement are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART).

1.3   Mission Use

The mission statement informs the development and implementation of instructional programs, school activities, and community outreach. It serves as a point of reference as the school establishes its academic and social goals, and provides a standard for evaluating the school's overall performance in achieving these goals in a rapidly changing and ecologically challenged globalized society.

1.4   Measurement of Mission Statement

The school regularly and effectively measures its progress towards the achievement of the goals expressed in the mission statement. These measurements serve as the basis for school improvement planning and the ongoing development of the mission statement.

1.5   Mission Development and Review

The school can demonstrate the process through which the mission statement was created and that it involved all groups of stakeholders in its creation. The school demonstrates an ongoing review of the school's mission statement and updates the mission according to the changing needs of the students.

1.6   Mission Communication and Publication

The mission statement is communicated to all stakeholders, internal and external, and is prominently displayed throughout the facility, on the school website, and in school publications.

STANDARD 2: THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Essential to a quality student experience is the instructional process—including how the curriculum is devised, monitored, updated, and delivered. The experience and qualifications of the teaching staff, ongoing professional development, use of relevant technologies, and the monitoring and encouragement of the teaching staff are vital to quality instruction.

The educational program is standards-based*, aligned with the school mission, and supported by proven instructional and assessment strategies. Curriculum development at the school level ensures that content is appropriate, logically sequenced and that all students can succeed in their course of studies. The program is regularly validated by both internal and external assessments of student learning.

*AIAA recommends the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). However, schools are free to adopt individual state standards, such as Virginia State Standards of Learning.

Indicators:

2.1   Mission-Driven

The educational program is driven by an understanding of the school's unique mission statement.

2.2   Standards-Based

The school's curricular areas meet all local government regulations and are based on clearly referenced and generally recognized international standards.* In compliance with international standards and the UN Vision 2030, the school commits to promoting the sustainability literacy of students, faculty, and staff.

*AIAA recommends the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). However, schools are free to adopt individual state standards, such as Virginia State Standards of Learning.

2.3   Curriculum Framework

The development of the curriculum follows professional curriculum guide formats and components, including the knowledge and skills students will learn, proven "good practice" instructional methods, a variety of authentic assessment methods, plans for differentiation of learning, and vertical and horizontal alignment with standards and levels of learning.

2.4   Curriculum Scope and Sequence

The curriculum demonstrates a complete scope and sequence for each academic subject, relevant to the school's particular context and the academic performance of its students. As defined:

Scope – the total body of knowledge that each student should know about the subject matter upon graduation.

Sequence – the learning that takes place at each grade level, including grade-specific goals, to help students move from one level to another.

Grade Specific Goals – each course has specific content goals for every grade level which are aligned with the sequence of learning for that subject matter.

2.5   Curriculum Adoption and Review

The school maintains a curriculum adoption and review policy to ensure that the curriculum is rigorous and relevant to their local and school context. Rather than simply adopting a standardized curriculum, such as those provided by textbooks, the school develops and modifies curricula in a

collaborative process involving representatives from school stakeholders. The curriculum is reviewed on a regular cycle to ensure that it continues to promote effective student learning.

2.6   Individualized Instruction

Teachers demonstrate the ability to assist all students to achieve the learning objectives in the subject and grade level they teach, applying principles of cognitive development and experiential learning. Teachers effectively provide specific interventions or accommodations for students who perform above or below grade-level expectations, and for those with individualized needs and different learning preferences.

2.7   Instructional Materials

Teachers effectively use a wide range of instructional materials to bring about effective teaching and learning for all learners.

2.8   Teacher Qualifications

Teachers have an appropriate level of subject knowledge (at least a Bachelor's degree, or equivalent professional qualification), pedagogic skills, interdisciplinary awareness, information literacy, and a commitment to local and global civic engagement. Teachers also satisfy local government requirements for teaching qualifications.

2.9   Teaching Strategies

Teachers demonstrate skill in the "art" of teaching by helping students to develop and use higher-order thinking skills to understand the subject matter, how it relates to the global society they face, and to make connections across subject areas. Teachers are well-versed in and regularly practice principles of experiential learning, student research, community-based learning, service learning, cooperative education, intercultural learning, project-based learning, and ecopedagogy.

2.10   Assessment of Teaching

Teaching is regularly assessed to ensure implementation of the curriculum, alignment with academic standards, use of effective, research-based instructional strategies, and continuous assessment of student learning.

2.11   Professional Development

The school has a professional development plan that includes training and opportunities for collaboration to improve instructional practices. The professional development plan is based on teacher and student performance data and is developed collaboratively between teachers and school leaders. Regular and ongoing professional development specific to digital resources and effective use of technology is provided for all teachers.

2.12   Teaching with Technology

Whether in fully online, hybrid, or brick-and-mortar schools, technology is integrated across the curriculum to provide a rich, transformative, and globally relevant learning experience for students.

2.13 Online Delivery of Instruction

Online instruction, whether for a blended learning or a fully digital program, is purposefully and professionally designed to facilitate learning in an online environment.

2.14 Use of Student Assessment Data

The school systematically collects and analyzes student performance data using varied forms of valid, reliable, and equitable assessments. A wide variety of summative and formative assessments are used to determine students' entry-level and end-of-course knowledge as well as progress throughout the year. Assessment data are used to modify or expand the curriculum, instructional methods, the professional development program, student services, and other school improvement goals.

2.15 Assessment Design

Assessments are aligned to all curricular goals, and a wide variety of formal and informal assessments are used to guide the instructional process. Differentiation within assessment allows opportunities for success for students with various learning abilities.

2.16 External Assessment

The school uses an external, standardized assessment system to measure and track student performance. Data from external assessments are used to benchmark student academic performance against national and/or international norms. Assessment results are shared with stakeholders and provide a basis for the development of the academic program, instructional methods, and materials, as well as student academic services.

2.17 Report of Student Performance

Student performance is regularly documented and shared with students and parents, including examples of the work completed by the students.

STANDARD 3: ADMINISTRATIVE AND FACILITY SUPPORT

The learning opportunities made available to students are backed by a well-defined and organized administrative support structure, whose responsibilities and functions are communicated to all stakeholders. The facilities and resources of the school and its learning environment promote the delivery of transformational learning opportunities for students. Financial support for the school program assures the continued success of operations. Aligning with its mission and standing as an international school, the administration also demonstrates its commitment to environmental stewardship by implementing policies for onsite recycling, zero-waste, and low-carbon energy.

Indicators:

3.1 Organizational Chart

The school has developed and published an organizational chart that outlines the administrative structure of the school and provides accurate position descriptions for all of its employees.

3.2   School Environment

The school administration provides a participatory climate supportive of change, development, and acceptance of innovation. To this end, the school uses a well-defined process for identifying issues to be addressed by school improvement efforts as well as the daily operations of the school. The school administration actively promotes the involvement of staff members, students, and parents in its daily operations, and models principles of environmental stewardship by implementing policies for onsite recycling, zero-waste, and low-carbon energy.

3.3   Staff Meetings

Staff meetings are held regularly to provide opportunities for professional collaboration, as well as to discuss policies, procedures, and general information.

3.4   Policies and Procedures

The school has developed and made available for stakeholders a comprehensive set of written policies and procedures for all school operations. They are clear, collaboratively developed, widely available, known to stakeholders, periodically reviewed and revised, and administered in a fair, transparent, and timely manner.

3.5   Staff Handbook

The school has developed and made available a staff handbook that explains the policies and procedures that apply to employee performance, as well as the benefits, and opportunities they are entitled to. The handbook delineates school policy on integrity in employment practices such as equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusiveness; the institutional code of conduct; and terms and conditions of employment. A formal acknowledgment that the employee knows and will abide by the code of conduct and all other institutional policies and procedures is signed by all employees.

3.6   Student Handbook

The school has developed and made available for stakeholders a student handbook, which includes the rights and responsibilities of students, a code of conduct, and a process for progressive discipline for student behavior. The school's policies on diversity and inclusiveness, child protection, and academic integrity are clearly outlined in the handbook, which is distributed to all Upper Elementary, Middle, and High School students, and to parents of Early Years and Lower Elementary (grades 1-3) students.

3.7   Appeals and Complaints

The school has developed and made available for stakeholders a policy and procedure for appeals or complaints from any stakeholder.

3.8   School Finances

The board of trustees and/or owner(s) of the school has provided a budget reflecting adequate resources to assure the school's continued operation, professional development, and growth.

3.9   Financial Management

The school financial accounts are professionally managed by a qualified accountant or bookkeeper regularly.

3.10   Student Safety

The school has developed and regularly drills safety and emergency response plans in compliance with local government regulations. As defined:

Safety Plan – *ongoing procedures that assure that all physical facilities and grounds are safe for students.*
Emergency Response Plan – *procedures to follow in case of an emergency, including fire.*

3.11 Child Protection

AIAA endorses the *International Task Force on Child Protection (ITFCP) Safeguarding Standards*, its **Thirteen Essential Questions,** and its **Expectations,** a copy of which is available on the AIAA website**.**

AIAA requires its accredited schools to adopt and publish their own Child Protection Policy based on ITFCP Guiding Principles and Expectations as well as relevant local government regulations.

The school must also publish and successfully implement a robust and articulated set of procedures for preventing and dealing with potential incidents of abuse. Included in these measures are the provision of an **appropriate level** of information and training for **all stakeholders** on how to deal with bullying, cyberbullying, and the various forms of abuse and neglect they might be exposed to.

(See AIAA's website for a Child Protection Policy template.)

3.12   School Facilities

The school facilities are adequate to meet the educational, social, and safety objectives of the program.

3.13   Facility Cleanliness and Upkeep

The school follows a schedule of cleaning and maintenance to maintain a hygienic environment and keep facilities in good repair and working order.

STANDARD 4: THE STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

External to the classroom, a multitude of services are provided to support student success. These services include the availability of up-to-date media and technology resources and access to a well-stocked on-site or digital library. The school also has available counseling services or referral information to families needing the support. The school has a health room that is available for students who become ill or need medical attention, staffed by a qualified medical professional. Further, the school makes available for students' co-curricular activities and opportunities for service through equitable and reciprocal interaction with the local community.

Indicators:

4.1   Adequate Funding

The school provides program coordination and resources for student support services that are external to but support classroom instruction.

4.2   Support Staff

Qualified personnel are provided to administer the student support services.

4.3 Availability and Management of Technology

The school's technology program meets the educational objectives and supports the administrative functions of the school.

4.4 Student Records and Transcripts

A complete, accurate, and permanent record and transcript are prepared for each student. These documents are prepared and securely maintained and are readily available to parents and students when requested. In all stages of this process, student privacy and confidentiality of the records are maintained.

4.5 Grading Policy

The school has comprehensive and uniformly applied policies for grading and granting of grade completion or credit.

4.6 Guidance and Counseling Services

Academic guidance and counseling services are available to assist students in planning a course of study that will prepare them to meet their future goals for career and study, and a referral process for community resources is made available. Professionally trained counselors are available to diagnose and support students with special needs.

4.7 Food Services

The school provides food services that offer healthy meal and snack choices, as well as a designated dining area where students can sit and enjoy their lunch break. Foodservice facilities and practices meet local and generally accepted health and safety standards, and food service personnel are trained in the implementation of these practices.

4.8 Health Room

The school has a well-furnished health room, fully equipped with essential medical supplies, and staffed by a medical professional. An up-to-date healthcare plan outlines basic practices and procedures to meet students' medical needs. In support of student physical and mental health, the school provides student counseling services or referral information, as well as designated safe spaces for students encountering any form of harassment or discrimination.

4.9 Community Service

The school actively promotes community service and engages students, parents, and teachers in community service projects. The school offers multiple opportunities for stakeholders to understand and address current local and global issues such as social justice, human rights, and environmental protection.

STANDARD 5: QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The school's quality management program includes ethical organizational practices, productive school-community relationships, and a school improvement plan that encompasses all areas of student learning and well-being. The school develops a comprehensive school profile including a student profile, a description of the community in which the school is located, and student performance data. After the profile is created, a comprehensive school improvement plan is developed in collaboration with key stakeholders. (Refer to the *AIAA website for the School Profile and Improvement Plan Guide*).

Indicators:

5.1 Institutional Integrity

The school demonstrates that it upholds the principles of equity, inclusion, respect, and transparency. The school's commitment to integrity is affirmed in a formal and written code of ethics that is easily accessible to stakeholders. The code should include guidelines on non-discrimination across policy and practice, academic integrity, and integrity in employment practices such as equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusiveness.

5.2 School Profile

The school profile contains information about the community, staff, students, student performance, and student growth in the curricular program.

5.3 School Improvement Plan

The school improvement plan is organized and composed of measurable goals, strategies for accomplishing the set goals, timelines for meeting the goals, and plans for measuring and monitoring progress towards goal achievement. The plan should include the adoption of an environmental stewardship strategy with targets, resources, and policies for net-zero carbon operations. The plan is available to stakeholders.

5.4 School Improvement Plan Development and Review

The school can demonstrate the process through which the school improvement plan was created and the involvement of all groups of stakeholders in its creation. The school's mission statement and school profile underpin the development of the plan. The school demonstrates an ongoing review and evaluation of the school improvement plan.

5.5 Goals

The goals in the school improvement plan are specifically and strategically aimed at sustainable growth in student learning and well-being. The goals are based on current best practices and can be measured.

5.6 Strategies

The strategies in the school improvement plan are designed to achieve the school's mission, values, and beliefs about learning. The strategies are goal-driven and include actions to take and responsibilities to fulfill to ensure implementation of the plan.

5.7 Timelines

The timelines in the school improvement plan include realistic short-term, mid-term, and long-range targets for accomplishing the plan's goals. Each set of targets includes benchmarks to monitor goal progress and can be used as reliable measurements of achievement.

5.8 Measurements

The school improvement plan calls for internal and external measurements to monitor goal progress. Internal (and/or external) measurements are utilized to track progress toward the goals, while measurements from external assessments (Standard 2.16) are used to validate that progress.