

CANADA – STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE AND LEARNING (SEAL) ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND STRATEGY

It is vital that schools have a clear sense of purpose and both a conceptual and practical framework for achieving its strategic goals. SEAL Canada would review this area to ensure that the school has a clearly articulated Vision, Mission, Values and Strategies, and that they are understood and accepted by all constituencies, including the Board, faculty, staff, parents, and students. These statements give direction to the Strategic Plan to ensure that all facets of school life are in alignment.

HOW WEB ALIGNS WITH THIS SEAL STANDARD:

WEB sets up a structure within a school for disseminating information and ensuring that the entire school community has the opportunity to engage in and support the school's defined mission and strategic goals.

With WEB, trained student leaders (grade 8s) are able to communicate and demonstrate the school's purpose and direction with and among those within the school population who might otherwise be disengaged: grade 6s. WEB focuses the information dissemination process through the student-to-student connection both one on one and in small groups. This makes it far more likely that critical information is received and remembered.

Additionally, the WEB Leaders and Coordinators themselves become more committed to the beliefs, philosophy and learning results of the school via their roles as messengers.

CO-CURRICULM AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Independent schools should provide a wide range of activities where all students are actively engaged in areas outside of the classroom. In this standard, the school must demonstrate that it promotes and acts upon the academic, emotional, physical and social potentials of all its members within an ethical community.

HOW WEB ALIGNS WITH THIS SEAL STANDARD:

With WEB students are given the permission to care about each other and the structure in which to do it. By connecting grade 8s with grade 6s with the structure and training to make the relationship meaningful, students have the opportunity to focus on the important aspects of their lives.

Specifically, WEB helps address the three fundamental transition needs that students have: safety, information and connection.

In many schools, the focus is on keeping students safe by keeping bad things from entering the school environment. As a result, money and resources are invested in security to seal off the school.

Those inside our schools, however, know that the far greater issue for students is keeping them safe from the negative forces within the school walls and halls. Bullying, rumors, isolation, and harassment are far more likely to pose safety risks on the average campus than external violence.

WEB allows students to have a trusted source of safety from their first moments at their school.

The more connected students are to their new school, the better they will do in all the measures that are important in tracking their success: grades, test scores, attendance, and discipline. All these measures are positively affected when students are connected.

WEB creates a structure that connects every incoming grade 6 with a caring grade 8 from their first day through the end of their grade 6 year.

Social Follow Ups are events organized by the WEB Coordinator team in which the grade 6s and Leaders attend fun school sponsored social events together.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

In this Standard, the school's program must be congruent with its mission and strategic plan. The academic program must be based upon an articulated philosophy and supporting research about how students learn and the most effective ways to teach them. The academic program should be designed to facilitate the school's mission and be implemented to meet the needs of its students. All students at an independent school should be receiving an enriched education.

HOW WEB ALIGNS WITH THIS SEAL STANDARD:

Schools that have implemented the WEB transition program indicate that when grade 6s connect with grade 8s in positive ways, schools can dramatically reduce truancies, dropouts, failing grades, bullying, harassment, disciplinary referrals and detentions. These initial indicators show that grade 6s experience feelings of connection to school, develop trusted relationships with adults and feel part of the community as a whole because they have connected with 8th graders as mentors.

The WEB program works because the Leaders not only help organize and guide the grade 6s through orientation day, but they also help to facilitate a smooth transition both socially and academically throughout the year. Using a series of social, academic and leader initiated interactions, the WEB Leaders maintain contact with their grade 6 groups and mentor them throughout the year.

Academic Follow Ups occur in a classroom setting; WEB Leaders visit grade 6 classes to teach lessons on topics such as time management, goal setting, and peer pressure.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Leadership by a qualified and committed senior administrative staff is crucial to the effective implementation of a school's strategic goals and to maintain excellence throughout a school's operations, inside the classroom and beyond. In this Standard, the school must demonstrate that its overall administrative organization communicates, carries out and supports the school's mission and strategic plan.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Strategic human resources management occurs when there is alignment between 'people decisions', and operational or program decisions. A strategic human resources function is one that works in partnership with senior management to ensure the policies and procedures related to people are effectively implemented and communicated. They should also reflect the values of the school and support the mission, vision and strategic plan.

To meet this Standard, the school's Human Resources Management strategy is in place to ensure that the people practices and policies support the educational purpose of the school and are aligned with the vision, mission, values and strategies.

HOW WEB ALIGNS WITH THIS SEAL STANDARD:

The WEB Coordinator training not only improves classroom instruction, it also trains the Coordinators to take leadership roles within the school, district, and professional community. Trained WEB Coordinators experience positive personal and professional transformations, a shared responsibility for student achievement and strengthened connections and communication between staff and students.