

## HOW WEB ALIGNS WITH SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

Accreditation is a process that schools undergo to ensure that they are worthy of the trust placed in them to provide high-quality learning opportunities and clearly demonstrate continual self-improvement. There are six regional accreditation agencies in the United States:

- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools,
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges,
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools,
- Northwestern Association of Accredited Schools,
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and,
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

In Canada the Standards in Excellence and Learning Accreditation Standards (SEAL) and the Canadian Educational Standards Institute (CESI) accredit schools.

Most accreditation standards are common among accrediting agencies. Below is a list of some of the key standards of accreditation for the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and Canada's Standards in Excellence and Learning, with which WEB aligns.

### WASC STANDARDS

#### ORGANIZATION

##### 1. SCHOOL PURPOSE

The school has established a clear statement of purpose that reflects the beliefs and philosophy of the institution. The purpose is defined further by adopted expected schoolwide learning results that form the basis of the educational program for every student.

##### 2. GOVERNANCE

The governing authority (a) adopts policies that are consistent with the school purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results for the school, (b) delegates implementation of these policies to the professional staff and (c) monitors results.

##### 3. LEADERSHIP

The school leadership (1) makes decisions to facilitate actions that focus the energies of the school on student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results, (2) empowers the staff and (3) encourages commitment, participation and shared accountability for student learning.

#### HOW WEB ALIGNS WITH THE WASC STANDARDS OF SCHOOL PURPOSE, GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP:

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 (8th graders) 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: 6th graders. 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.

#### **4. STAFF**

The school leadership and staff are qualified for their assigned responsibilities, are committed to the school's purpose and engage in ongoing professional development that promotes student learning.

##### **HOW WEB ALIGNS WITH THE WASC STANDARD OF STAFF:**

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.

#### **5. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

The school has a safe, healthy, nurturing environment that reflects the school's purpose and is characterized by respect for differences, trust, caring, professionalism support, and high expectations for each student.

#### **6. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS**

The school leadership facilitates school improvement which (a) is driven by plans of action that will enhance quality learning for all students (b) has school community support and involvement, (c) effectively guides the work of the school, and (d) provides for accountability through monitoring of the schoolwide action plan.

##### **HOW WEB ALIGNS WITH THE WASC STANDARDS OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND IMPROVEMENT:**

WEB helps improve overall school culture. Hundreds of schools have watched as their student bodies have become more connected, more spirited and kinder to each other. A result of placing eighth grade WEB Leaders in the position of looking out for sixth graders, there is a reduction in bullying.

Because of the diversity of the leaders, WEB gives students who would otherwise not socialize with each other a common purpose and a common goal, thus diminishing antagonism that might exist between these groups. WEB Leaders are positive, natural leaders from a broad social cross-section so student leadership is shared by a variety of groups on your campus and the climate reflects the diversity of the school population.

Additional Information and Documents:

- Logic Model
- 40 Assets
- CASEL
- 11 Principles of Character Education

## **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

### **1. WHAT STUDENTS LEARN**

The school provides a challenging, coherent and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose and results in student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results through successful completion of any course of study offered.

### **2. HOW STUDENTS LEARN**

The professional staff (a) uses research based knowledge about teaching and learning; and (b) designs and implements a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students at a high level of learning consistent with the school's purpose and expected schoolwide learning results.

### **3. HOW ASSESSMENT IS USED**

Teacher and student uses of assessment are frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process. The assessment results are the basis for (a) measurement of each student's progress toward the expected schoolwide learning results, (b) regular evaluations and improvement of curriculum and instruction, and (c) allocation of resources.

#### **HOW WEB ALIGNS WITH THE WASC STANDARDS OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION:**

Schools that have implemented the WEB transition program indicate that when 6th graders connect with 8th graders in positive ways, schools can dramatically reduce truancies, dropouts, failing grades, bullying, harassment, disciplinary referrals and detentions. These initial indicators show that 6th graders 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 6<sup>th</sup> graders 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 6<sup>th</sup> grade groups and mentor them throughout the year.

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

## **SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH**

### **1. STUDENT CONNECTEDNESS**

Students are connected to a system of support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community that meet the challenges of the curricular and co-curricular program in order to achieve the expected schoolwide learning results.

The school is a) a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning and b) has a culture that is characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement.

All students receive appropriate support along with an individualized learning plan to help ensure academic success. Students have access to a system of personal support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community.

## **2. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

The school leadership employs a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's established support system for students.

### **HOW WEB ALIGNS WITH THE WASC STANDARDS OF STUDENT CONNECTEDNESS AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP:**

With WEB students are given the permission to care about each other and the structure in which to do it. By connecting 8<sup>th</sup> graders and 6<sup>th</sup> graders 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 WEB 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 creates a structure that connects every incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grade with a caring, trusted source of safety, a well-trained 8<sup>th</sup> grader from their first moments at their school throughout the entire year.

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.

Social Follow Ups are events organized by the WEB Coordinator team in which the 6<sup>th</sup> graders and Leaders attend fun school sponsored social events together.