

WHAT IS?
***ACCREDITATION FOR
GROWTH***

**A Self-Study and
Accreditation Protocol**

**For Schools Seeking Accreditation
by**

**The Commission on Elementary Schools
The Commission on Secondary Schools
The Committee on Institution-Wide
Accreditation**

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools

**3624 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104
Phone: (215) 662-5603 Fax: (215) 662-0957
Email: info@css-msa.org**

WHY IS ACCREDITATION IMPORTANT?

The activity now known as accreditation is traceable to the guild orientation of the medieval academic communities. The word “accreditation” is derived from middle French, old Italian usage. The first meaning of its root term is “trustworthiness.” Since the early 1900s, accreditation has had a major impact on the field of American education. Accreditation responds to the public’s demands for improved quality and greater accountability for institutions serving society’s needs. Accreditation agencies enjoy a unique “public trust” role in the United States. Accredited schools can be trusted by the public to be what they claim they are and to do what they claim to do. Whatever an accredited school says about itself has both the sanction and the confidence of the profession.

Accreditation encourages and facilitates school improvement.....

- Involvement in an ongoing accreditation protocol fosters excellence and ongoing improvement in a school. The question is not if we want a better school, but how we will assure continuous school improvement. Accreditation provides a *systematic* process that requires a school to ask why it exists, to establish a vision of its future, and to determine specific objectives for reaching that vision.
- The *information* gathered through the accreditation protocol serves as a sound basis for school/district improvement, strategic planning, restructuring, and staff development.
- The accreditation process *examines the entire school*—its philosophy and goals, its community, its programs and services, the facilities and financial stability.
- Accreditation provides a way to *manage change* through regular assessment, planning, implementation, and reassessment.
- Accreditation helps schools/districts *establish priorities* for improvement by using thorough needs assessments, rather than faddish approaches to improvement.
- Accreditation requires a school to establish and *implement a 5-year improvement plan* based upon its vision of the future. Desired school-wide results are a part of the perpetual accreditation cycle that includes:
 - School self-assessment that identifies areas of strength and areas for improvement in the current educational program for students.

- Insight and perspective from the evaluation team.
 - Regular assessment of progress during the intervening years between full self-studies.
- The accreditation process helps to ensure *greater continuity* of student experiences through continuous clarification of the school's direction.
 - Participation in accreditation provides an excellent *growth experience for staff* who participate on visiting teams to evaluate other schools.
 - Because accreditation is a regional activity that encourages broader involvement with educators from other states and independent, public, and church-related constituencies, participants learn from the differences and benefit from the resulting *professional networks*.
 - The *support of MSA staff* and encouragement of the Committee on Institution-Wide Accreditation motivates schools to maintain their focus on continuous school improvement.

Accreditation provides a means for public accountability.....

- The accreditation process validates to the public the *integrity of a school's program and student transcripts*.
- The accreditation process assures a school community that the school's *purposes are appropriate* and are being accomplished through a viable educational program.
- The accreditation process *justifies the faith and resources* others place in the school.

Accreditation fosters stakeholder involvement and commitment.....

- Accreditation provides opportunities for *grass roots, broad-based involvement* of stakeholders in charting the direction of the school.
- The accreditation process offers *a mechanism* for constituent groups to play a major role in determining the school's future, helping a school to be all it can be.
- Accreditation involves key people in *creating a vision* of the future, rather than letting the future happen to the school.

Accreditation builds positive public relations.....

- Accreditation provides opportunities to *emphasize the positive* and show how strong and effective the school is.
- Willingly submitting a school to public scrutiny and evaluation builds commitment and a deeper understanding of the school's efforts. It helps staff to *broaden its view of community expectations* and *fosters closer school and community collaboration*.
- The accreditation process provides *articulation and communication opportunities* between school levels and among stakeholder groups.

WHAT IS ACCREDITATION FOR GROWTH?

The *Accreditation for Growth (AFG)* protocol differs from other accreditation formats historically used by accrediting agencies because *AFG* brings a new focus to the most important work of schools and school communities—Increasing the performance of their students. Quite simply, the *AFG* protocol seeks to change the traditional school culture of focusing primarily on the inputs of school improvement (facilities, program, services, etc.) to focusing on the outputs desired in student performance.

Using strategic planning as a vehicle for school improvement and growth in student performance, the *Accreditation for Growth* protocol provides linkages to various planning and school improvement efforts. In *AFG*, the primary determinants of progress are not the resources a community provides for the schools (the inputs), but instead the actual results of the school's work—the students' performance. *AFG* requires the school to establish objectives for improving student performance based on a vision of a preferred future for the school. Therefore, *AFG* is a future oriented and visionary process. In addition, the *AFG* protocol provides for a continuous review of programs and services and of the results of student performance. Finally, it allows diverse constituent groups to participate in charting the future of the school.

In this era of accountability, student performance is and should be the essential focus of schools, school communities, and educators. School leaders must keep the attention of the entire school community on the five questions below. In the *Accreditation for Growth* protocol, the following five questions will guide the school's inquiry.

QUESTION #1: By the time students have completed our school's education program What should they know? What should they be able to do with what they know? What kinds of qualities and characteristics should they demonstrate?

QUESTION #2: At what level should students be able to perform these expectations and what would that look like?

QUESTION #3: How will we determine (assess and evaluate) how well our students perform these expectations?

QUESTION #4: How well do our students currently perform? What is the actual quality of their work? What are the gaps between how well our student currently perform and what we expect?

QUESTION #5: What are our priorities for growth and improvement in student performance? What does the school community have to do to close or eliminate those gaps?

A great school is never satisfied with the results it is getting in student performance. Even when it achieves its performance goals, it moves its efforts to other areas of performance in need of growth and improvement or it raises the bar—its expectations. In other words, it is engaged in continuous growth and improvement.

In setting a course for continuous growth and improvement in student performance, the school must study not only what the existing data tell about the students' present performance, but the school must also set clear targets for what the school wants student performance to be. Maintaining a focus on the above five questions is essential to a successful continuous planning process and is a "habit of mind" that must be cultivated and nurtured by the school's leadership. Too often schools find themselves working on curriculum and instructional materials and engaging in staff development before they have decided clearly what students should know, how they should use their content knowledge, process skills, and work habits, and what the quality of their performance should be.

The *Accreditation for Growth* protocol was written to be compatible with school improvement requirements of the federal government and the various states and governing agencies. There is a great amount of flexibility inherent in *AFG* and thus, the protocol is compatible with any school improvement requirement that focuses primarily on increasing the level and quality of student performance. By using the *AFG* protocol, most schools will be able to fulfill school improvement requirements of their various governing agencies and to obtain accreditation through the same planning process.

ACCREDITATION FOR GROWTH **COMMITMENTS**

While *AFG* is flexible in its approaches, the following five areas are the *non-negotiables* of the *Accreditation for Growth* process. Evidence of these parameters must be in place in order for the school to be accredited using the *AFG* protocol.

By choosing *AFG* as its accreditation protocol, an institution must make several commitments:

A Focus on Student Performance and Growth

- The institution is committed to focusing its improvement efforts on growth and improvement in student performance and the institution's capacity to affect that growth and improvement. Improvement efforts are aimed at targeted growth and improvement in student learning, student performance, and student results.

A Culture of Accountability in Student Performance

- The institution is committed to student performance objectives that are measurable. There is a viable process for monitoring achievement of the objectives, and there is an accountability system for monitoring accomplishment the objectives and the action plans to achieve them.

A Planning Ethic

- The institution is committed to a continuous clarification of its unique mission, beliefs, and expectations in terms of student performance. The institution is action-oriented as shown by the development of long-term strategic action plans that integrate program, services, facilities, and other support systems to address growth needs.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

- The institution is committed to continuous evaluation, an annual review process, peer review, and a dynamic process with the flexibility to modify action plans.

Involvement of Representative Constituents

- The institution is committed to involving a broad spectrum of the institution's stakeholders in identifying the mission, beliefs, profile of graduates, objectives for growth and improvement in student performance, and action plans to achieve the objectives. Stakeholders are also involved in overseeing implementation of action plans and monitoring achievement of the objectives.

When an institution selects the *Accreditation for Growth* protocol, it must endorse these five commitments. All levels of the organization, including the governing board, the central staff, and the institution itself must commit to working together toward the implementation of the growth and improvement plan developed in the *Accreditation for Growth* protocol.

COMPONENTS OF THE *ACCREDITATION FOR GROWTH* PROTOCOL

STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION	PLANNING PROCESS	CONTENT OF THE PLAN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 – Philosophy/Mission ▪ 2 – Governance and Leadership ▪ 3 – School Improvement Planning ▪ 4 – Finances ▪ 5 – Facilities ▪ 6 – School Climate 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 and Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Context of the Institution ▪ Planning Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Composition ▪ Operation ▪ Feedback ▪ Role of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administration ▪ Governing Body ▪ Internal Coordinators ▪ External Facilitator** ▪ Communication and Awareness Activities ▪ Action Plan and Implementation Teams** ▪ Annual Reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District Strategic Plan** ▪ Beliefs ▪ Mission ▪ Profile of Graduates ▪ Internal Scan** ▪ External Scan** ▪ 2, 3, or 4 Measurable Student Performance Objectives with Technical Review ▪ <i>Non-Accreditation for Growth</i> Goals** ▪ Action Plans

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT AFG

What are the components of the Accreditation for Growth protocol?

The table on the previous page provides an overview of the specific components of the *Accreditation for Growth* protocol. First, the institution must demonstrate that it meets the MSA Standards for Accreditation. It is expected that representative stakeholders will be involved in determining how well the institution meets these standards.

Second, a team representing the stakeholders of the institution and community must develop a plan to improve areas of student performance that have been identified as priorities for growth and improvement. This plan should be consistent with the institution's overall strategic plan. The plan must contain the following components:

- A mission
- Belief statements
- A profile of graduates that describes the desired attributes and achievements that students are expected to exhibit upon graduation/exiting the final grade of the institution
- Two, three, or four measurable student performance objectives approved by Middle States
- Action plans that detail what the institution and its community will do to achieve those objectives.

Finally, the institution must put into place planning structures and processes that will ensure the institution has the capacity, the will, and the systems to implement its action plans. The planning process typically includes two or more educators serving as coordinators of the planning and accreditation process, and a team of stakeholders that is responsible for developing and monitoring the *AFG* growth and improvement plan, establishing procedures for communicating planning activities to the educational community and obtaining the community's ongoing input into the plan, ensuring that the plan is reviewed at least annually, and establishing one or more teams responsible for developing, reviewing, and revising the action plans.

How does Accreditation for Growth differ from other accreditation protocols?

Middle States provides its member institutions with a number of options for the protocol they will use for accreditation. Therefore, an important question to ask is, "What are the major differences between other accreditation protocols and *AFG*?" In order to understand the *AFG* protocol and the reasons why this alternative was created,

a comparison with the traditional protocol used for over 45 years might be helpful. The description below shows the five major areas in which differences can be identified: focus, stakeholder involvement, structure, review, and drive.

FOCUS: In traditional accreditation processes, the institution focuses its attention on a *retrospective* look at what it has done to improve such variables as educational programs, student services, learning media services/technology, and facilities. As a part of the self-study process, the institution conducts a comprehensive study of inputs into the educational process. For institutions that need an in-depth self-examination from the “inside-out,” the traditional process often remains the protocol of choice.

In the *Accreditation for Growth* protocol, the focus of the institution’s attention is on a *prospective* look toward a desired future. In *AFG*, a strategic plan is developed that details desired *results*—what the institution aims to improve in areas of student performance determined by the institution itself. Two, three, or four student performance objectives clearly outline those priority areas on which resources and the institution’s growth and improvement initiatives will be concentrated. The growth and improvement process is based on the priorities that the institution and its community identify as important. Commitment and ownership grow from the early stages of identifying the hopes and aspirations of the educational community.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT: Another area of difference lies in the range of individuals involved in the improvement and accreditation activities of the institution. In the traditional approach, the institution’s staff and administration are the primary participants in the self-study and evaluation process.

Accreditation for Growth, however, requires broader stakeholder involvement and requires contributions from the staff, administration, parents, board members, students, alumni, and often community representatives. This is considered to be essential, because *AFG* is based on constructing a clear notion of the institution’s mission and its underlying belief system. In *AFG*, a broader group of constituents is needed to chart a future direction for the institution and to support the efforts needed to reach that future direction.

STRUCTURE: The traditional accreditation process involves all staff members and the administration in a number of subcommittees that meet over the course of approximately one year to analyze inputs—every subject area along with other areas such as student services, guidance, facilities, and finance. A Steering Committee comprised of staff and administration provides overall management of the process

during the year of self-study and during the subsequent visiting team's evaluation. Once the self-study and visit are completed, these groups typically disband.

In the *AFG* process, there is a single Planning Team comprised of representatives of each of the institution's stakeholder groups. This Team initially develops the mission, beliefs, profile of graduates, and student performance objectives, and oversees development of action plans to achieve the objectives. While membership on the Planning Team may change over time, the group continues to meet throughout the accreditation cycle to provide oversight of the implementation of the growth and improvement plan. Some institutions, especially larger school districts and educational institutions, also use separate action plan and implementation teams for each of their student performance objectives. This allows broader stakeholder participation and involvement in the action planning and implementation processes. Such teams, however, generally report to the overall Planning Team on a regular basis.

REVIEW: The traditional approach provides a ten-year accreditation cycle with two five-year accreditation terms. An onsite visit by a team of ten to fifteen educators at the beginning of each cycle is followed by a smaller, shorter Five-Year Review visit at the midpoint of the ten-year timeline in order to renew accreditation for a second five-year term. A Five-Year Review report is submitted to the Middle States Association in which the institution describes what actions it has taken on each of the Visitation Team's recommendations

Ongoing review is the hallmark of the *AFG* protocol, and the institution's Planning Team is required to conduct a review of the plan and the institution's progress toward achieving its student performance objectives at least annually. Every seven years, a Validation Team (typically five individuals) makes an onsite visit to the institution to examine the results of these annual reviews, the institution's ongoing planning processes, and the implementation of the growth and improvement plan. Two and one-half years following the Team's visit, one individual, appointed by MSA, makes an onsite Mid-Point Review visit. Where possible, this individual is selected from the Validation Team that reviewed the plans and processes two to three years earlier. While the Mid-Point Review visit is typically completed in one day, a school district or large educational institution may require a longer visit and, possibly, more than one Mid-Point Reviewer.

DRIVE: A final difference between the traditional and *AFG* protocols can be found in what drives the accreditation process. External standards developed by Middle States and its member institutions are the driving force of the traditional accreditation process.

These Standards for Accreditation include: educational programs, student services, learning media services and technology, facilities, finance, student life and student activities, leadership and governance, assessment of learning, health and safety, organizational design and staff, planning, and philosophy/mission/beliefs/ objectives.

AFG also assesses whether the institution meets the Middle States Association Standards for Accreditation. However, the driving force of the *AFG* protocol is a forward-looking strategic approach to ensuring growth and improvement in areas of student performance identified as priorities for the institution. Internally-determined mission, beliefs, and objectives for improved student performance drive the work of educational communities engaged in *AFG*. The Validation Team looks at the Standards for Accreditation in two different ways. First, each standard is analyzed separately to ensure that the institution meets each standard. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the standards are examined in the context of the action plans and what will be needed to reach the student performance objectives the institution has set. Thus, addressing the standards (inputs) is directly linked to desired outputs, as demonstrated in improved student performance.

In summary, the traditional accreditation protocol emphasizes how well present programs are functioning and whether key input variables are in place. The *Accreditation for Growth* protocol emphasizes what is possible and desired for the future with the measure of success being the results produced by the institution. Exhibit 3D provides a rationale for choosing *AFG* as the accreditation protocol.

Are all institutions required to have an overall strategic plan AND a site plan specific to the institution?

When an institution is a part of a larger system, the larger system (e.g., a school district or diocesan/archdiocesan school system) often has a strategic plan in place. When such a plan exists, it is important for the institution's growth and improvement objectives and plan to be consistent with the larger system's plan. If, however, no system plan exists, an institution may still use the *Accreditation for Growth* planning process.

Why does Middle States think strategic planning is important to institutional growth and improvement?

Artful and effective planning can engender growth and improvement in educational outcomes in at least four meaningful and significant ways. First, effective planning involves the institution and its stakeholders in an *inductive* process that allows varied

issues, concerns, hopes, and aspirations to be raised. It can open up boundaries and create new vistas, offering a forum for new, never-dreamed-of ideas to surface.

Second, effective planning begins with the development of a vision for the future and follows with self-evaluation and collection of data to determine how close the institution is to achieving its vision. A vision-driven process fosters commitment and ownership, and ownership is a powerful force for educational growth and improvement.

Third, effective planning requires an institution to focus on results first. In order to determine how to accomplish an objective, the institution must first decide exactly what it wants to achieve. The result of a well-taught class is not that the instruction was completed appropriately, but that following completion of instruction, learning occurred. Instruction is the means, learning is the result, and learning is reflected in student performance.

A fourth characteristic of effective planning is that it is continuous. Change is ubiquitous and likewise planning based on the results obtained should be ongoing.

What is the difference between long range planning, comprehensive planning, and strategic planning?

Long range planning assumes that the future is fixed and already known; planning is not based on a vision of what the future might or could be. The locus of control in long range planning is often external to the organization.

Two assumptions underlie comprehensive planning. The first assumption is that *existing systems* can be perfected. Secondly, it is assumed that these systems deserve to be perfected. In comprehensive planning, incremental changes are made to existing systems.

In strategic planning, the locus of control is inside the organization because planning is based on the organization's vision of a preferred future. Strategic planning assumes that as a human organization, the institution has the ability to exercise control over external factors and can create the future. Strategic planning is grounded in how the organization sees itself and how it sees the world. It is about creating the desired reality and going about building that future.

Does Middle States endorse a particular strategic planning approach?

Middle States does not endorse a particular approach to strategic planning. As long as the key commitments (see Exhibit 3E) are met, any well designed strategic planning process may be used.

What happens if the institution is unable to achieve its AFG objectives fully during the seven-year accreditation term?

First and foremost, Middle States is looking for evidence of growth and improvement in *student performance*. It is critical that the institution makes a good faith attempt to address fully its objectives and to implement the action plans upon which the institution's accreditation is based. The development of student performance objectives with reachable, yet lofty targets requires a delicate balance. MSA wants to see institutions develop objectives that challenge them and make them stretch to achieve them.

Besides looking for student performance growth, MSA is also expecting to see growth in the *organization's capacity* to produce the results it desires in terms of student performance. It is important for an institution to provide evidence that, if it is not making the kind of progress it had intended on the student performance objectives, it conducts a self-analysis to determine why and adjusts its plans accordingly. A "culture of planning" should cause an AFG institution to develop new systems continuously to ensure that the plans become a reality.

All of this is taken into consideration when the Commission makes its accreditation decision. An institution's accreditation would be in jeopardy if the institution did not achieve its objectives, did not try to determine why and revise its action plans accordingly, **and/or** had not made a good faith effort to implement its action plans.

Can a candidate institution choose the AFG protocol?

A candidate institution can select AFG, although, in some cases, the MSA staff might suggest that a candidate institution use one of its protocols that engages the institution in a comprehensive examination of all programs and services. The Candidacy Visitor who makes an onsite visit to a potential candidate institution can also help new institutions determine whether AFG is an appropriate approach to take.

Are there progress reports to be submitted to Middle States between Validation Team visits?

Because the focus of *AFG* is on continuous review, there are no interim progress reports submitted to MSA as is required in the traditional approach. However, institutions are expected to conduct reviews of the progress being made toward achieving its objectives at least once annually (although most institutions find that more frequent reviews are necessary). The Validation Team will examine the records of the reviews during its visit. Prior to the midpoint juncture in the seven-year accreditation term, an individual appointed by MSA will make a one-day onsite Mid-Point Review visit. Preparation for this review is described in detail in Section 12. Where possible, this individual will be a member of the Validation Team who reviewed the plans and processes two or three years earlier. Finally, when the next Validation Team visits the institution at the end of the seven-year accreditation term, team members will want to see evidence that continuous review and annual updates have taken place.

Can AFG be used in an institution that is rapidly changing, has frequent staff or administrative turnover, or has a transient student body?

Yes, all of these situations might be ideal for using the *Accreditation for Growth* protocol. Because *AFG* helps to provide focus and direction, many institutions find it is an appropriate process to ensure that the institution “stays the course” even as it experiences rapid changes in staff, students, or administration.

Because the *AFG* plan for growth and improvement in student performance is developed and, thereby, owned by the institution’s stakeholders, the plan can serve as a stabilizing force, especially when there is a change in the leadership of the institution. Instead of selecting a new leader that is expected to act out *his/her* vision of a preferred future for institution, institutions with an *AFG* plan will look for a new leader who has the best knowledge, skills, and ideas to lead the school community in implementing *its* plan for a preferred future.

Can AFG be used in a Pre K-12 organization?

A Pre K-12 organization can use the *AFG* protocol to accredit its institutions. *Accreditation for Growth* has been officially recognized by both the Middle States Commission on Elementary Schools and the Middle States Commission on Secondary Schools as an appropriate accreditation option. See Section 15: Using the *AFG* Protocol for Pre K-12 Accreditation.

Can AFG be used by a charter institution or in an institution with a unique student population?

The flexibility of the *AFG* protocol makes it particularly adaptable for charter institutions and institutions that serve unique student populations. This accreditation option facilitates planning structures and improvement within the specific context of the institution.

What are the costs associated with accreditation using the AFG protocol?

The costs for being accredited by the Middle States Association using the *AFG* protocol vary depending on a number of variables. These variables include: 1) where the institution is in the seven-year accreditation term; 2) the costs for hotel rooms and meals in the institution’s community; and, 3) the number of campuses that must be visited by the Validation Team. Other costs may also vary depending on accreditation activities that are at the discretion of the individual institution.

The following chart serves as a worksheet for institutions in determining the costs for accreditation using *AFG* over the seven-year accreditation term. Items shown in **BOLD CAPITALS** are dues and fees charged by and paid directly to the Middle States Association and for which an invoice is provided. Other items shown are at the discretion of the institution.

For the current dues and fees charged by MSA, visit the MSCES (www.ces-msa.org), MSCSS (www.css-msa.org/resources/forms.html), and/or CIWA websites (www.ciwa-msa.org) or contact the appropriate Middle States office.

Annually

<p>ANNUAL DUES <i>**Annual dues and accreditation fees are set separately by the two Commissions. Dues are based on the size of the institution and are subject to change. Please contact the appropriate Commission office for a current list of dues and fees.</i></p>	\$
<p>Team Service <i>**The professional development experience of serving on Validation Teams is available and encouraged every year. However, some institutions find it beneficial to send more representatives during the preparation phases of hosting their own visits. While no specific cost to the sending institution is charged, many find the need to budget for costs of substitutes for absent staff members.</i></p>	\$

Prior to and in the Year of Self-Study

<p>Workshop Attendance <i>**There are no separate charges for attending overview workshops, but costs may be associated with travel to the nearest location for staff members. Middle States does offer some</i></p>	\$
--	----

<i>workshops for a fee to those institutions who desire additional guidance on such topics as Action Planning, etc. The schedule of workshops is included on the MSCSS website at www.css-msa.org/workshops.</i>	
---	--

In the Year of Self-Study

EVALUATION PREPARATION FEE <i>**Charged every seven years (usually in the fall of the self-study year. This fee includes the cost of self-study materials, attendance at overview workshops, building and managing the Validation Team, training of team chairs, preparation and editing of the written team report, and managing the Mid-Point Review visit, and preparation/editing of the report.</i>	\$
Preparation of the Self-Study Document <i>**The institution may incur the normal internal costs of developing and maintaining its growth and improvement plan and preparing for the Validation Team's visit. Some institutions hire an external facilitator to assist in the planning process. Others utilize district staff to facilitate. Institutions might conduct teacher/student/ parent/community surveys as a part of their internal scanning process.</i>	\$

In the Year of the Validation Team's Visit

Pre-Visit by the Team Chair <i>**The pre-visit is for part of one day and seldom requires an overnight stay. Therefore, the amount is usually for travel costs. These costs are paid directly to the Team Chair.</i>	\$
Validation Team Visit <i>**The amount will vary based on local costs for hotel and meals, the distance team members must travel to the institution, and other variables. Typically, individual institutions will host a five person team for 3½ days. There will also be costs associated with copying, binding, and mailing the Self-Study Document for Validation Team members and others.</i>	\$
Secretarial costs <i>**The Team Chair might require secretarial services to compile the Validation Team's report. The maximum allowable for such services is \$250.00.</i>	\$

In the Years Between Validation Team Visits

Annual Review <i>**Although no specific fees are associated with reviewing the progress of the plan or updating it to reflect new ideas, institutions should consider the costs of meeting, communicating, documenting, and celebrating the progress made on the plans each year.</i>	\$
Mid-Point Review <i>**This visit takes place at the 2½ year juncture of the seven-year accreditation term. This visit seldom requires an overnight stay and usually involves travel costs only.</i>	\$
Workshop Attendance <i>**Middle States offers numerous workshops for a fee that are aimed at providing institutions with additional assistance in such topics as Data Driven Decision Making; Maintaining the Momentum, etc.</i>	\$

THE AFG PLANNING PROCESS FOR CONTINUOUS GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT

A sound planning ethic and planning process are every bit as critical to achieving an institution's goals for growth in student performance and the institution's capacity to effect that growth as is a plan rich in content. An effective planning ethic and process address the essential question: "Does the institution have the capacity, the will, and the systematic structures required to implement its plan and achieve its goals?" A fine plan full of great activities is only as strong as the ability and willingness of the institution and its stakeholders to implement it.

While successful planning is reflective of an organization's context and culture, it should be visionary in describing what an organization wants to become and pragmatic in specifying the steps to reach that goal. Successful planning for growth and change has been described as a delicate balance between brave steps forward and reassuring steps to the side; between the recognition of the need for growth and a celebration of what already exists that is good, steady, and/or certain; between the bold, frequently scary, visions of future possibilities and the comfort with past and present successes.

When an institution seeks accreditation using the AFG protocol, it must commit to working toward establishing and maintaining a planning ethic within the institution. A planning ethic means that planning for growth becomes part of what the institution and its stakeholders do as much as providing programs, teaching, resources, services, and activities. A planning ethic requires continuous clarification of the institution's unique mission, beliefs, profile of graduates, and student performance objectives. It requires that all of its processes are vision-driven. And it requires that the institution is action-oriented by developing long-term strategic action plans that integrate programs, services, facilities, and support to address the institution's growth needs.

In the *Accreditation for Growth* protocol, the institution also makes a commitment to continuous growth and improvement. The institution and its stakeholders should demonstrate that they are never satisfied with the status quo in terms of student performance, but are striving constantly to improve that performance. The setting and striving to achieve challenging growth goals should become a dynamic process in which the institution develops the flexibility to revise and modify its plans to achieve its goals based on the results received from implementing those plans. As part of the accreditation process, the institution should review the results of its efforts at least annually and willingly open its processes and results to review by its peers in the Middle States Association.

It is also essential for the institution to commit to involving its stakeholders in meaningful ways in the setting of goals, developing plans to achieve and measure those goals, and the implementation of those plans. In a planning culture, the institution strives to develop broad ownership of the planning process and the plan for growth and improvement by the entire community by ensuring broad based knowledge and understanding of and support for the goals and the plans to achieve them.

In the *AFG Self-Study Document*, the institution describes its efforts to meet these planning expectations. There are eight required and three optional areas of the planning process that the institution must describe to the Validation Team in this Document.

Each of these areas is important to the success of the institution's planning processes. Therefore, in the early stages of its involvement in the *Accreditation for Growth* protocol, the institution should be thoughtful about how it designs its planning process. It is important for the institution to keep in mind that the planning process refers not only to how the initial plan is developed, but also how it will be implemented, monitored, and adjusted in order to remain a dynamic plan over the full term of accreditation.

THE AFG PLAN FOR GROWTH AND PERFORMANCE IN STUDENT PERFORMANCE

When the institution's Planning Team has been formed and it has determined how it will perform its functions, the Team begins the process of developing and implementing a plan for growth and improvement in student performance.

This process involves:

- Establishing a vision for the institution by creating or reaffirming a statement of mission.
- Identifying a set of beliefs that will serve as the institution's ethical code.
- Developing a profile of the knowledge, skills, and qualities the institution expects of its graduates.
- Identifying the areas of student performance that are the priorities for growth and improvement.
- Developing action plans to achieve the performance objectives.
- Monitoring implementation of the action plans.
- Conducting periodic reviews of the progress being made toward achievement of its objectives.

There are five required components of the *AFG Plan for Growth and Improvement in Student Performance*:

- Mission
- Beliefs
- Profile of Graduates
- Measurable student performance objectives
- Action plans to achieve the objectives

There are other components that are not required but often included:

- The strategic plan of a larger or parent organization
- Results of an internal scan
- Results of an external scan.
- Strategic goals on which the institution is working that are not student performance goals

The Criteria for AFG Objectives

Level 1: Technical Criteria

- Is the objective stated as a desired end result in student performance? (What do we expect our students to know? What do we expect them to be able to do with what they know? and/or What qualities or characteristics do we want them to demonstrate?)
- Is the objective currently measurable?
- Are multiple forms of assessment used to measure growth on this objective?
- Is the objective measured by an external assessment? (Note: MSA strongly recommends that the institution give consideration to having at least one of the objectives measured by an external tool.)
- Is the objective related to improvement in an area of academics? (Note: If none of the objectives relate to academics, the institution needs to be prepared to explain why academics are not a focus for growth over the next seven years. In addition, public schools need to be prepared to provide an explanation if their improvement objectives and plan do not include areas of student performance mandated for improvement under the requirements of NCLB.)
- Does the objective relate to as many of the institution's students as possible?
- Does the objective relate to culminating expectations for students at or near the end of their experiences in the institution?
- Does the objective reflect expected growth in student performance, over time (i.e., are baseline data available for the measures identified along with appropriate targets for those measures)?
- Is the baseline year noted as well as the year when the objective will be realized?

The second level of objectives review is conducted by the Validation Team during the team visit. The results of their analysis will be contained in the final written team report. The Validation Team will answer the following questions.

Level 2: Achievability and Appropriateness Criteria

The six Level 2 Achievability and Appropriateness Criteria are addressed by the Validation Team during the Team's visit. The results of the Team's analysis are included in the Team's written report.

- How closely are the objectives associated with exit outcomes for students as expressed in the Profile of Graduates, graduation requirements, and/or performance expectations for the institution?

- How do the objectives reflect the institution's mission, and how do they support the strategic plan of the larger organization?
- Do the institution's stakeholders support the objectives as the highest priorities for growth and improvement in student performance?
- Does the institution have sufficient energy and resources to support the implementation of the action plans and the achievement of the objectives?
- Does the institution have an effective and efficient way to gather data to assess the progress of the objectives? Are baseline data currently available, logically organized, and presented in an easily understood format?
- Are the objectives reasonable and achievable?

EXAMPLE MEASURABLE STUDENT PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

Example #1:

By 2013, a graduate of All People High School will demonstrate an increased awareness and understanding of contemporary issues of peace and justice, as determined by:

- A) A five percentage points increase in the percentage of students participating actively in one or more school or community and civic group or activity with a peace and justice purpose.

Baseline Data: 2006-07

51.5% of all students participated actively in one or more group or activity

83% of all 12th-grade students participated actively in one or more group or activity

68% of all 11th-grade students participated actively in one or more group or activity

43% of all 10th-grade students participated actively in one or more group or activity

12% of all 9th-grade students participated actively in one or more group or activity

- B) A 10 percentage points increase in the percentage of students contributed 20 more hours of voluntary service to the community annually.

Baseline Data: 2006-2007

31% of all students contributed 20 or more hours

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.¹]

¹ Disaggregating student performance data of all types is extremely important to the growth and improvement process. When schools seek to change performance based on aggregate data of averages, they do not have a true picture of their students' performance, because averages do not portray accurately the range of student performance on any one assessment. Trying to change averages usually leads to "one size fits all" action plans, which seldom provide the desired results. By disaggregating data to determine if there are sub-groups of students whose performance differs significantly from the norm, the school is able to design actions that are specifically tailored for and focused on the specific needs of each sub-group. Given that all schools have finite time, energy, and resources, they are more likely to achieve the results they seek by planning on the basis of disaggregated data.

- C) An increase of 41 percentage points in the percentage of students that demonstrate acceptable awareness and understanding of social justice issues by scoring 85% or above on the All People High School Peace and Justice Assessment.

Baseline Data: 2006-2007

39% of all students scored 85% or above on the Peace and Justice Assessment

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- D) A decrease of xx percentage points in the percentage of students disciplined one or more times in the school year for infractions of the Code of Conduct related to respect for others and interpersonal relations.

Baseline Data: 2006-2007

21% of all students disciplined one or more times for infractions of the Code of Conduct related to respect for others and interpersonal relations

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

Example #2:

By the year 2013, all students will meet Exemplar High School's meeting the standards for Academic Proficiency or Advanced Academic Proficiency in the core areas of mathematics, language arts, science, history, world languages, and computer science as demonstrated by:

2.1 Mathematics

- 1.0.0 The percentage of all students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Mathematics will increase by 11.8 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

44.2 percent of all students Advanced or Proficient in Mathematics

- 1.0.0.0 The percentage of Caucasian students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Mathematics will increase by 18.4 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

48.6 percent of Caucasian students Advanced or Proficient in Mathematics

1.0.0.0 The percentage of African-American students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Mathematics will increase by 32.4 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

34.6 percent of African-American students Advanced or Proficient in Mathematics

2.0.0.0 The percentage of Hispanic students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Mathematics will increase by 40 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

27 percent of Hispanic students Advanced or Proficient in Mathematics

3.0.0.0 The percentage of male students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Mathematics will increase by 23 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

44 percent of male students Advanced or Proficient in Mathematics

4.0.0.0 The percentage of female students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Mathematics will increase by 23 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

44 percent of female students Advanced or Proficient in Mathematics

5.0.0.0 The percentage of ELL students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Mathematics will increase by 67 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

0 percent of ELL students Advanced or Proficient in Mathematics

6.0.0.0 The percentage of IEP students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Mathematics will increase by 49.5 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

17.5 percent of IEP students Advanced or Proficient in Mathematics

7.0.0.0 The percentage of socio-economically disadvantaged students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Mathematics will increase by 32 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

35 percent of socio-economically disadvantaged students Advanced or Proficient in Mathematics

- 1.0.0 Increase the mean score of improvement between pre and post tests in Mathematics by 10 percent

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

10 percent mean score indicating improvement between pre and post tests in Mathematics

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 2.0.0 An increase of 13 percentage points in the percentage of students scoring 600 or above on the SAT I mathematics assessment

Baseline Data: Year 2007

12% of all students scored 600 or above on the SAT I mathematics assessment

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 3.0.0 An increase of 11 percentage points in the percentage of students enrolled in and passing one or more Advanced Placement classes in Mathematics

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

9 percent of all students enrolled in and passed one or more Advanced Placement courses in mathematics

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 1.0.0 An increase of 22.7 percentage points in the percentage of students scoring 3 or above on Advanced Placement exams in Mathematics

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

2.3 percent of all students scored 3 or better on Advanced Placement exams in Mathematics

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 2.0.0 An increase of 20 percentage points in the percentage of students enrolling in and passing one or more Honors level courses in Mathematics
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
20 percent of all students take and pass Academic classes in Mathematics

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 1.1.7 The percentage of students failing one or more courses in Mathematics will be reduced by 5.2 percent.
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
9.2 percent of all students failed one or more classes in Mathematics

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

1.2 Language Arts

- 2.0.0 The percentage of all students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Reading/Language Arts will increase by 11.8 percentage points
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
44.2 percent of all students Advanced or Proficient in Reading/Language Arts

- 1.0.0.0 The percentage of Caucasian students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Reading/Language Arts will increase by 18.4 percentage points
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
48.6 percent of Caucasian students Advanced or Proficient in Reading/Language Arts

- 2.0.0.0 The percentage of African-American students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Reading/Language Arts will increase by 32.4 percentage points
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

34.6 percent of African-American students Advanced or Proficient in Reading/Language Arts

3.0.0.0 The percentage of Hispanic students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Reading/Language Arts will increase by 40 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

27 percent of Hispanic students Advanced or Proficient in Reading/Language Arts

4.0.0.0 The percentage of male students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Reading/Language Arts will increase by 23 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

44 percent of male students Advanced or Proficient in Reading/Language Arts

5.0.0.0 The percentage of female students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Reading/Language Arts will increase by 23 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

44 percent of female students Advanced or Proficient in Reading/Language Arts

6.0.0.0 The percentage of ELL students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Reading/Language Arts will increase by 67 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

0 percent of ELL students Advanced or Proficient in Reading/Language Arts

7.0.0.0 The percentage of IEP students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Reading/Language Arts will increase by 49.5 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

17.5 percent of IEP students Advanced or Proficient in Reading/Language Arts

8.0.0.0 The percentage of socio-economically disadvantaged students attaining the Advanced or Proficient level in Reading/Language Arts will increase by 32 percentage points

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

35 percent of socio-economically disadvantaged students Advanced or Proficient in Reading/Language Arts

- 4.0.0 Increase the mean score of improvement between pre and post tests in Reading/Language Arts by 10 percent
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
10 percent mean score indicating improvement between pre and post tests in Reading/Language Arts

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 5.0.0 An increase of 13 percentage points in the percentage of students scoring 600 or above on the SAT I Critical Reading assessment
Baseline Data: Year 2007
12% of all students scored 600 or above on the SAT I Critical Reading assessment

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 6.0.0 An increase of 23 percentage points in the percentage of students scoring 600 or above on the SAT I Writing assessment
Baseline Data: Year 2007
22% of all students scored 600 or above on the SAT I Writing assessment

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 7.0.0 An increase of 11 percentage points in the percentage of students enrolled in and passing one or more Advanced Placement classes in English
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
9 percent of all students enrolled in and passed one or more Advanced Placement courses in English

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 3.0.0 An increase of 22.7 percentage points in the percentage of students scoring 3 or above on Advanced Placement exams in English
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
2.3 percent of all students scored 3 or better on Advanced Placement exams in English

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 4.0.0 An increase of 20 percentage points in the percentage of students enrolling in and passing one or more Honors level courses in English/Language Arts
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
20 percent of all students take and pass Academic classes in English/Language Arts

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 1.1.7 The percent of students failing one or more courses in English/Language Arts will be reduced by 5.2 percentage points.
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
9.2 percent of all students failed one or more classes in English/Language Arts

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

1.3 Science

- 1.3.1 An increase of 18 percentage points in the mean score of improvement between pre and post tests in Science
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
32 percent mean score indicating improvement between pre and post tests in science.

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 1.0.0 An increase of 12 percentage points in the percentage of students enrolling in and passing one or more Advanced Placement classes in Science
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
8 percent of all students enrolled in and passed one or more Advanced Placement courses in Science

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 1.0.0 An increase of 15 percentage points in the percentage of students scoring 3 or above on Advanced Placement exams in Science
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
0 percent of all students scored 3 or better on Advanced Placement exams in Science

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 2.0.0 An increase of 19 percentage points in the percentage of students enrolling in and passing one or more Honors level courses in Science
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
61 percent of all students enrolled in and passed one or more Honors level courses in Science

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 1.3.5 A 2.6 percentage points decrease in the percentage of students failing courses in Science
Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007
4.4 percent of all students failed courses in Science

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

1.4 World Languages

- 1.4.1 An increase of 10.6 percentage points in the percentage of student enrolling in and passing one or more Advanced Placement courses in the World Languages

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

1.4 percent of all students enrolled in passed one or more Advanced Placement courses in the World Languages

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 1.0.0 An increase of 10 percentage points in the percentage of students scoring 3 or above on Advanced Placement exams in the World Languages

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

.46 percent of all students scored 3 or better on Advanced Placement exams in World Languages

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 2.0.0 A increase of 22 percentage points in the percentage of students enrolling in and passing one or more Honors level courses in World Languages

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

23 percent of all students enrolled in and passed one or more Honors level courses in World Languages

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

- 1.4.4 A decrease of 3 percentage points in the percentage of students failing courses in World Languages

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

4 percent of all students who taking World Languages fail a course in World Languages

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

1.5 History

1.5.1 An increase of 9.6 percentage points in the percentage of students enrolling in and passing one or more Advanced Placement courses in History

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

6.4 percent of all students enrolled in and passed one or more Advanced Placement courses in History

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

1.0.0 An increase of 18 percentage points in the percentage of students scoring 3 or above on Advanced Placement exams in History

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

2 percent of all students scored 3 or better on Advanced Placement exams in History

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

2.0.0 An increase of 13 percentage points in the percentage of students enrolling in and passing one or more Honors level courses in History

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

32 percent of students enrolled in and passed one or more Honors level courses in History

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

1.5.4 A 2.2 percentage points decrease in the percentage of students failing courses in History

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

3.2 percent of all students failed courses in History

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

1.6 Computer Science

1.6.1 An increase of 8.2 percentage points in the percentage of students enrolling in and passing one or more Advanced Placement courses in Computer Science

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

1.8 percent of all students enrolled in and passed one or more Advanced Placement courses in Computer Science

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

1.0.0 An increase of 18.2 percentage points in the percentage of students scoring 3 or above on Advanced Placement exams in Computer Science

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

1.8 percent of all students scored 3 or better on Advanced Placement exams in Computer Science

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

2.0.0 An increase of 8.7 percentage points in the percentage of students enrolling in and passing one or more courses in Computer Science

Baseline Data: Year 2006-2007

6.3 percent of all students take and pass classes in Computer Science

[Disaggregate as above or by other student sub-groups whose performance differs significantly from the mean. Baseline performance data and targeted five-year performance should be indicated for each sub-group.]

COMPARISON OF ELEMENTS OF MSA SELF-STUDY AND ACCREDITATION PROTOCOLS

	<i>Accreditation for Growth</i>	<i>Excellence by Design</i>	<i>Reflections on Standards of Quality</i>
FOCUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting measurable objectives and developing action plans to grow and improve areas of student performance ▪ Meeting the 12 Middle States Standards for Accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishing an ethic of planning for growth and improvement in student performance ▪ Setting measurable objectives and developing action plans to 1) grow and improve areas of student performance and 2) improve the organization's capacity to achieve the levels of student performance it desires ▪ Developing an understanding of the antecedents for the current levels of performance and capacity ▪ Meeting the 12 Middle States Standards for Accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting the 12 Middle States Standards for Accreditation ▪ Meeting the Middle States Indicators of Quality for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment for each curricular area ▪ Planning for improvement in student performance and organizational capacity
STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN SELF-STUDY AND PLANNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broad stakeholder involvement including the staff, administration, students, parents, the board, community members, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broad stakeholder involvement including the staff, administration, students, parents, the board, community members, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Primarily staff driven with some involvement of the governance ▪ Other stakeholder such as parents and students may be included.

	<i>Accreditation for Growth</i>	<i>Excellence by Design</i>	<i>Reflections on Standards of Quality</i>
STRUCTURE OF SELF-STUDY AND PLANNING PROCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stakeholder Planning Team ▪ Action Plan Teams (optional) ▪ Implementation Teams (optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stakeholder Planning Team ▪ Action Plan Teams (optional) ▪ Implementation Teams (optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Steering Committee ▪ Subcommittee for each MSA Standard ▪ Subcommittee for each curricular area ▪ Subcommittee to develop improvement plan
COMPONENTS OF THE PROTOCOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning Process ▪ Plan for Growth and Improvement, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mission ○ Beliefs ○ Profile of Graduates ○ Measurable objectives ○ Action Plans ▪ Self-Assessment of Adherence to MSA Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning Process ▪ Context of the School ▪ Profile of the Community ▪ Profile of Student Performance ▪ Profile of Organizational Capacity (results of Self-Assessment of Adherence to MSA Standards) ▪ Plan for Growth and Improvement, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mission ○ Beliefs ○ Profile of Graduates ○ Measurable objectives ○ Self-Assessment of Adherence to Indicators of Quality for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment ○ Gap Analysis/Analysis of Root Causes ○ Action Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three, four, or five measurable objectives ▪ Action plans ▪ Self-Assessment of Adherence to MSA Standards

	<i>Accreditation for Growth</i>	<i>Excellence by Design</i>	<i>Reflections on Standards of Quality</i>
MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two, three, or four measurable objectives for areas of student performance identified as priorities for growth and improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three, four, or five measurable objectives for areas identified as priorities for growth and improvement in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student performance (minimum of two) ○ Organizational capacity (optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three, four, or five measurable objectives for areas identified as priorities for growth and improvement in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student performance (minimum of two) ▪ Organizational capacity (optional)
MEASURABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All objectives must be measurable using multiple assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All objectives must be measurable using multiple assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All objectives must be measurable and should use multiple assessments
TECHNICAL REVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All objectives must be reviewed by MSA staff and determined to meet the MSA technical criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All objectives must be reviewed by MSA staff and determined to meet the MSA technical criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All objectives must be reviewed by MSA staff and determined to meet the MSA technical criteria
EXTERNAL PEER EVALUATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Validation Team onsite visit (typically five members). ▪ Visit of three and one-half days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Validation Team onsite visit (typically five members). ▪ Visit of three and one-half days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visiting Team onsite visit (typically 10-15 members). ▪ Visit of three and one-half days
TERM OF ACCREDITATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seven years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seven years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seven years (effective with schools entering self-study on or after September 1, 2008).
ACCREDITATION MAINTENANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mid-Term Report in third year of accreditation ▪ Mid-Term Visit as determined by MSA staff or requested by school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mid-Term Report in third year of accreditation ▪ Mid-Term Visit as determined by MSA staff or requested by school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mid-Term Report in third year of accreditation ▪ Mid-Term Visit as determined by MSA staff or requested by school