

Florida Catholic Conference Accreditation Program

Visitation Handbook for the Continuous Improvement Process for Accreditation

2013 – 2014

Table of Contents

Getting Started	Page 1
Purpose	Page 1
Preparing for the Visitation	Page 2
The School	Page 2
The Diocesan Schools Office	Page 2
The FCC Accreditation Office	Page 2
The Visitation Team	Page 2
Diocesan Schools Office Conference Call	Page 3
Pre-visitation Conference Call	Page 3
The Visitation	Page 3
Team Responsibilities	Page 3
Plans / Documents to Review	Page 4
Possible Schedule	Page 4
Possible Questions for Stakeholder Meetings	Page 5
End of the Visitation / Closing Report	Page 6
Post-Visitation	Page 6
Final Steps	Page 7
Resources	Page 7
Sample Classroom Observation Checklist	Page 7
Voucher Form	Page 8

Getting Started

1. The FCC Accreditation office will collaborate with the Diocesan Schools Office to name the visitation team chairperson.
2. The chairperson will contact the school principal to set the dates of the visitation.
3. The principal will have all materials ready for review at least one month prior to the visitation.

Purpose

The purpose of the Accreditation Visitation is validation of the school's compliance with the benchmarks and validation of the action plan. The visitation team gives the school and the FCC Accreditation Committee feedback on these issues.

In order for the visitation to be beneficial for all parties involved, a professional atmosphere must be maintained. Comments should be as objective, as possible, based on best practices and research. The visitation will take place over two school days.

Preparing for the Visitation

The School

- Reviews collected evidence as needed for validation of the benchmarks (some evidence may be hard copies or electronic, other evidence will be found through observation and conversation); see list of plans that will be reviewed
- Contacts the Diocesan Schools Office to review and validate the benchmarks under the diocesan purview
- Communicates with the chairperson to set the dates of the visitation and the date of the pre-visitation conference call
- Budgets for the travel, lodging, meals, and stipends of the visitation team (Mileage rate is based on the school's diocesan policy. Team member stipend is \$175; Chairperson stipend is \$350.)
- Makes lodging reservations for team members and consult with them regarding travel plans
- Sets up room for visitation team to use (privacy is important)

The Diocesan Schools Office

- Reviews all CIPA materials
- Contacts the FCC Accreditation Office to suggest chairpersons for the visitation
- Reviews and validates the benchmarks under the diocesan purview:
 - 2.1 Religious Education curriculum and instruction meets diocesan policy.
 - 2.3 Religion teachers meet diocesan policy.
 - 5.1 – 5.6
 - 6.1 Administrator meets diocesan policy.
 - 6.3 Development and oversight of faculty and staff meets diocesan policy.
 - 7.8 Faculty and staff meet diocesan policy.
 - 7.9 Faculty and staff have and improve knowledge and skills necessary.
 - 10.1-10.6, 10.8 Finances
 - 11.1-11.4 Human Resources
 - 14.5 Safe environment compliance (fingerprinting and diocesan program: Virtus: Protecting God's Children, Shield the Vulnerable, etc.)
- Conferences with the visitation team chairperson

The FCC Accreditation Office

- Works with the Diocesan Schools Office to secure a chairperson for the visitation
- Assembles the Visitation Team members (including a member from the host diocese if applicable)

The Visitation Team

- Chairperson
 - Contacts Diocesan Schools Office at least one month prior to the visit
 - Contacts the school administration to set the date of the visitation and the date of the pre-visitation conference call or site visit
 - Reviews all CIPA materials

- Holds pre-visitation conference call or site visit with the school
- Contacts team members 3 weeks prior to the visit
- Creates the schedule for the visitation
- Assigns benchmarks, classroom observations, meetings
- Team Members
 - Review all CIPA materials and information from the chairperson
 - Contact the school regarding travel arrangements

Diocesan Schools Office Conference Call

- The visitation team chairperson contacts the Diocesan Schools Office regarding the visitation (at least one month prior to the scheduled visitation)
- The CIPA materials are discussed
- Any concerns with benchmarks and action plans are discussed
- The chairperson seeks any clarification needed regarding diocesan policy and expectations
- The Diocesan Schools Office participation in the visitation is planned (conference call during the visit; attendance at the closing report) and the pre-visitation conference call or site visit is discussed

Pre-visitation Conference Call or Site Visit

- After consulting with the Diocesan Schools Office, the chairperson holds a conference call or site visit with the school administration and steering committee chairpersons
- Points for discussion
 - Clarification on any CIPA materials
 - Visitation Schedule
 - Travel, lodging, and meals plan

The Visitation

Team Responsibilities

1. Review the CIPA documents and evidence
 2. Review each Domain Report
 - Review the rating and evidence for each benchmark. As a team, determine validation and comments/suggestions.
 - Observe each classroom for 10 to 20 minutes to validate level of compliance with specific benchmarks:
 - Mission statement visible 1.4
 - Catholic Culture visible 2.6
 - Role Model 3.4 / supports faith life 4.5
 - Instruction allows students to become evaluators, problem solvers, decision makers 7.3
 - Instruction prepares students to be excellent users of technology 7.4
 - Instruction addresses affective dimensions 7.5
 - Instruction engages and motivates all students 7.6
- Use Observation Worksheets to keep track of findings.

- Meet with pastor, administration, staff, students, and parents to validate level of compliance with specific benchmarks. (Possible questions are listed, but use any questions needed for clarification.)
3. Review the Action Plan
- Review each goal and strategies.
 - As a team determine validation and comments/suggestions.

Plans / Documents to review

- Schedules (2.2, 14.7)
- Professional Development Plan (7.10)
- Tuition / Registration information (10.7)
- Facilities, Equipment, and Technology Management Plan and budget for this (12.1-12.3)
- Marketing Plan (13.1)
- Enrollment Management Plan (13.2)
- Development Plan (13.3)
- Health Plan (14.1)
- Health Records – random check (14.2)
- Inspection Forms (14.3)
- Safety Plan (14.4)
- Nondiscrimination statement – posted or in handbook, bulletin, etc. (14.6)
- School Year Calendar (14.7)
- Entry Age Policy (14.8)
- Student Records – random check (14.9)

Possible Schedule

Team arrives the evening before the visit and has an introductory meeting.

Day 1

7:30 am	Arrival at school / Introductions / Tour
Morning	Meet with steering committee co-chairs for clarifications Brief team meeting Observations Team work sessions
Lunch	Team meets with steering committee for clarifications
Afternoon	Observations Meet with Pastor; Students Meet with staff and teachers, as needed Team work sessions
Evening	Team dinner and work session

Day 2

Drop Off Time	Meet with Parents
Morning	Talk with Diocesan Schools Office Continue observations / meetings as needed Team work sessions
Early Afternoon	Team work sessions Closing Report

Possible Stakeholder Meeting Questions

Pastor

- How are you involved with the students, staff, and administrators (5.5)?
- Do you see Catholic identity, scripture, Catholic Tradition, and Catholic social teachings integrated into all subject areas (2.4, 2.5, 2.7)?
- How do you see the staff as role models for the students (3.4)?

Administration

- How is the mission statement used (1.2)?
- How often and by whom is the mission statement reviewed (1.3)?
- How do you communicate and work with the pastor (5.5)?
- Have you established networks of collaboration throughout the school community (6.4)?
- How is school-wide data used to plan for academic excellence (6.5)?

Parents

- Do you know the mission statement (1.5)? Do you understand it?
- Do you see all staff members as role models for your children (3.4)?
- How has the school assisted you in educating your children in the faith (4.2)?
- How has the school assisted you in growing in your own faith (4.3)?
- How have you been involved or invited to be involved in the service programs (4.4)?
- Do you see every staff member supporting the faith life of the school community (4.5)?
- How does the administration communicate with you and you with the administration (6.7)?
- How is student achievement data shared with you (8.2)?
- How have you been invited to be involved with the school, teachers, or students (9.1)?
- How are you given information regarding tuition and tuition assistance (10.7)?

Students

- Do you know the mission statement (1.5)? Do you understand it?
- Are your teachers and other people on the staff role models for you (3.4)? How?
- How do you use technology in your classes (7.4)?
- What does your teacher do when you don't understand something (7.6)?

Teachers

- Do you know the mission statement (1.5)? Do you understand it?
- How are Catholic identity, scripture, Catholic Tradition, and Catholic social teachings integrated into all subject areas (2.4, 2.5, 2.7)?
- How do you see yourself as a role model for the students (3.4)?
- Do you have vertical and horizontal team meetings (7.1)? Have you mapped any of the curriculum (7.1)?
- Do you have professional learning communities or data teams (7.7, 8.5)?
- What student data is used in planning and how is it used (8.1, 8.3)?
- What criteria is used to evaluate student work and how is it reported (8.4)?

Staff

- Do you know the mission statement (1.5)? Do you understand it?
- How do you see yourself as a role model for the students (3.4)?
- How have you been involved or invited to be involved in the service programs (4.4)?
- Meet with personnel overseeing guidance, wellness, behavior, etc. to determine level of compliance for 9.2.

End of the Visitation / Closing Report

Toward the end of the visitation, the team members submit any receipts for travel, meals, and lodging. The school prepares reimbursement checks for these expenses along with the stipend for each team member. (Mileage rate is based on the school's diocesan policy. Team member stipend is \$175; Chairperson stipend is \$350.)

The visitation team meets with the school staff to give a brief closing report before they leave the school. The report should include:

- A few highlights from each Domain, including some of the recommendations and some of the comments from the stakeholder meetings
- A few comments regarding the Action Plan, including some of the recommendations
- Appreciation for hospitality

Post Visitation

Chairperson

Within a week of the visitation, the chairperson contacts the FCC Accreditation office to give a brief update regarding the visit. At that time the Associate Director for Accreditation will advise the chairperson of any other documentation or work needed.

FCC Accreditation Office

- The FCC Accreditation office staff will review the visitation materials and documentation. If any clarification is needed, it will be discussed during the post visitation conference call.
- The FCC Accreditation office staff will contact the Diocesan Schools Office to discuss the visitation materials and documentation.
- A recommendation will be made to the FCC Accreditation Committee regarding the accreditation status of the school.
- Once approval is obtained, the school will receive notice and the new accreditation certificate.

Final Steps

After the visitation, the school administration will be contacted if any clarifying information is needed. Once the accreditation status has been approved, the school will receive the new accreditation certificate and directions regarding next steps. The next steps could include:

- Revision of the Action Plan
- Implementation of the Action Plan
- Specific work toward compliance with benchmarks
- Follow up conference calls and/or visits to validate compliance with benchmarks

Resources

Sample Classroom Observation Checklist

Classroom			
1.4 Mission Statement Visible	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:
2.6 Catholic Culture Visible	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:
4.5 Evidence of supporting faith life	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:
7.3 Instruction allows students to become evaluators, problem solvers, decision makers	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:
7.4 Instruction prepares students to be excellent users of technology	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:
7.5 Instruction addresses affective dimensions	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:
7.6 Instruction engages and motivates all students	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Comments:
Types of student work			
Type of instruction			

Stipends and Travel Reimbursement

The school reimburses the visitation team members for any travel and lodging expenses incurred. The automobile mileage reimbursement rate used is the rate of the school's diocese. The school gives each team member an honorarium of \$175 and the chairperson \$350. Each team member completes a voucher form during the visitation and the school gives them a check before they leave.

**FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE
VOUCHER FORM FOR VISITATION TEAM MEMBERS AND CHAIRPERSON**

NAME _____

DATE _____

SCHOOL VISITED _____

TRAVEL:

CAR _____ (Submit receipts)

PLANE _____

OTHER _____

MEALS _____ (Submit receipts)

HONORARIUM (In addition to reimbursement for travel, lodging, and meals, the school provides an honorarium to each team member as follows.)

Chairperson: \$350.00

Team Member: \$175.00

(Signature of Team Member)