

Part 2: Domain B (Governance, leadership, and ownership)

Introduction

Your report will focus on the school's alignment with the standards on governance, leadership, and ownership. These standards cover a number of important issues, such as:

- the procedures by which the governing body is appointed or elected,
- its custodianship of the school's guiding statements,
- the extent to which it conforms to the CIS Code of Ethics,
- its manner of conducting school business,
- the leadership it demonstrates in guiding the school, and
- the clear definition of roles.

Governance

There are different models of governance in international schools, and the accreditation of a particular school does not imply that the school needs to adopt a specific one. However, there are essential characteristics of governance that ensure success:

- the organization, consistency, and constant improvement of the Board;
- the nature and quality of the relationship between the school's ownership, the Board, and the Head of School; and
- the leadership and development of the Head of School.

Leadership

Effective leadership provides mission and vision, organizes an institution to fulfil those goals, and inspires the constituencies to support and work with one another. Leadership leads from the front and the back, collaborates, and serves.

Management

Management concerns the day-to-day operations of the school. It is essential that the daily operations are clearly vested in the responsibility of the Head of School, who should ensure they are carried out with the support of the other professional staff. It is essential to have a clear set of role definitions that separate governance from management while, at the same time, establishing a strong, collaborative relationship between the Board and the Head of School.

Use the attached document to help you take notes during your meeting with various stakeholder groups.

Self-Study committee responsible for Domain B

1. Who was involved in the self-study committee? How was membership decided?
2. How is the responsibility for the direction of the school organized at the Board level?
3. How would you describe the Head of School's role in creating policies? How is this documented?
4. Are you aware of the school's educational and financial plans? Are others outside the Board and administration able to access this information? How are the plans developed and reviewed?
5. Have you seen a copy of the Board policy manual? Does it include statements on legal and ethical principles?
6. Do those with interest in the school have knowledge of the school's most recent financial audit? How about descriptions of school funding, budgeting procedures, and management of financial and accounting affairs?
7. How are various school constituency groups involved in decision-making and budgetary processes?
8. How is leadership shared at the school? How is it developed?

The Board

1. Can you describe the structure of the Board and how members are appointed or elected?
2. What are the appraisal procedures for the Board and the Head of School?
3. How does the Board participate in current long-range financial planning?
4. How are financial reports from those charged with the day-to-day management of school funds communicated to the Board?
5. How are policy and procedure-setting processes conducted? To what extent is the constituency involved?
6. How does the Board communicate with staff and parents?
7. What recommendations would you offer for future Board development?

School proprietors

1. What is the proprietary role in school governance and management?
2. What outside professional consultation, if any, has been sought in school operations?
3. What are the lines of authority among the proprietors, the Board, management, and staff?
4. What recommendations would you have to expand the active involvement of the Proprietor in the future work of the school?

School leadership team

1. Are there effective written job descriptions for each management position, including the Head of School? How current are they?
2. What are the channels of communication between management and the Board? What degree of access does each member of management have to the Board, and vice versa?
3. Describe the processes for staff and personnel recruitment. Are there one or two recent circumstances where challenges have been overcome?
4. To what extent is management aware of an educational and financial plan for the short-, medium-, and long-term?

5. To what extent is management consulted in the creation and periodic review of the educational and financial plans?
6. What recommendations would you offer to further strengthen this area in the future?

Teachers

1. How, where, and how often are the school's primary goals clearly articulated to the staff?
2. How are teachers encouraged to engage in dialogue, both formally and informally, with representatives of the Board and the Head of School?
3. How does discussion and review of mission and goals help to align teachers with those who manage and govern the school?
4. Are school resources, both human and capital, adequate to support school programmes?
5. How can the school involve constituent groups in the future?

Admissions team

1. Are the school's promotional materials current, clear, and factually accurate in portraying the school to prospective parents and students?
2. How do you ensure that applicant families are fully informed of their financial obligations prior to actual enrolment?
3. What provisions might the school consider to best articulate the mission of the school in the future?

Alumni and Parents

1. Are public statements relating to programmes, services, and resources current, clear, and factually accurate? Are they consistent with the school's mission?
2. Do members of the Board and management avoid conflicts of interest and comply with applicable statutes, government laws, and regulations?
3. What are the available paths open to parents, alumni, and friends who wish to assist the school?
4. Does the Board protect the school from exploitation and unjust criticism from the school community?
5. Are there ways that the school might involve parents and alumni in the future?