

# **A GUIDE TO ASSESSING YOUR ARTS SCHOOL**

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Questions for Internal Review and  
Reflection

**Accrediting Commission for Community and Precollegiate Arts Schools**

**Arts Schools Network**

**Council of Arts Accrediting Associations**

National Association of Schools of Art and Design

National Association of Schools of Dance

National Association of Schools of Music

National Association of Schools of Theatre

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## 2022 - 2026 Assessment Rubric ASN Exemplary Schools

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_ Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

School District: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Levels: \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_

### Program Overview – 100 Points

**A score of 90 or higher is needed to be designated an ASN Exemplary School**

The proposal should contain:	Low	Mid	High	Score								
1. A brief description of the school program not to exceed 200 words	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	/10	
2. School's mission and goals statements		1	2	3	4	5					/5	
3. School organizational chart, no longer than one page in length		1	2	3	4	5					/5	
4. List of current school personnel by title and/or teaching assignment		1	2	3	4	5					/5	
5. Links to course catalogue, school schedule and student handbook(s)		1	2	3	4	5					/5	
6. Brief narrative describing how the school meets the Principles of Exemplary Practice. (It is recommended that the narrative include a response to each criterion but that the entire narrative is no longer than four typed double-spaced pages in length, using Times new Roman font, size 11.) <b>NOTE: If your school has earned ACCPAS accreditation, this section does not need to be completed. Please attach documentation of your accreditation status.</b>	5	10	15	20	25	30					/30	
7. Brief history of school data and highlights (year opened, longitudinal milestones, has this school been replicated, where/when/results) not to exceed one page.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	/10	
8. Discuss critical success factors (financial support, internal and external organizational structure, and other support systems) that result in exemplary status of your school, not to exceed one page.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	/10	
9. List notable alumni and year of graduation, if possible.		1	2	3	4	5					/5	
10. List of outstanding student and school achievements that demonstrate quality arts instruction and preparation.		1	2	3	4	5					/5	
11. Electronic copy of the school logo. If the school does not have a logo, please submit a high resolution photograph that represents the school.		1	2	3	4	5					/5	
12. Web links to online documentation that serves as evidence of the information requested.		1	2	3	4	5					/5	
											<b>Total</b>	<b>/100</b>

**Comments (Any area rated at mid-point or lower should have explanation below):**

## Foreword

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Arts Schools Network is a community of schools and institutions dedicated to education in and through the arts. Its mission is to provide the leadership necessary to inspire and maintain excellence in arts education by supporting and serving leaders of specialized arts schools across the country. A large proportion of its membership consists of arts magnet and arts-focused high schools. Arts Schools Network is the only non-profit professional organization in the United States and Canada that encourages and facilitates communication about leadership excellence in specialized arts schools. Its expertise comes from its membership and partner organizations across the nation.

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Precollegiate Arts Schools (ACCPAS) was established in 2001 by the Council of Arts Accrediting Associations to assess and accredit schools such as those that belong to the Arts Schools Network.

ACCPAS and the Arts Schools Network are pleased to make available *A Guide to Assessing Your Arts School*, developed collaboratively by our two organizations to assist arts schools in assessing their mission, operations, and programs. Should your school be interested in accreditation, we believe the *Guide* may provide a useful introduction to the accreditation process. We hope, too, that you'll find working through the *Guide* with your staff, faculty, and trustees to be an inspirational experience that will lead to a healthy future for your school.

The Arts Schools Network and ACCPAS are proud of our long association and mutual commitment to advance the field of focused P-12 arts education. We look forward to continuing our partnership in service to the field.

**R. Scott Allen, Ed.D.**  
*Managing Director*  
Arts Schools Network

**Samuel Hope**  
*Executive Director*  
Council of Arts Accrediting Associations

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## Acknowledgments

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The Arts Schools Network and ACCPAS express deep appreciation to the National Association of Schools of Music for permission to use the text of an assessment document on community arts education published in 1988 and 1997. Parties also express gratitude to the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts and Council of Arts Accrediting Associations for allowing the joint Guild/ACCPAS assessment guide of 2008 to be used as the basis for this document.

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## Introduction

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### **Purposes of the *Guide***

The Arts Schools Network and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Precollegiate Arts Schools (ACCPAS) have jointly developed this *Guide* as a way to assist arts school personnel with important responsibilities for planning, evaluating, and implementing effective organizational development. The *Guide* is an assessment tool that uses questions based on ACCPAS accreditation standards. Organizations that may not want to take the assessment process all the way to accreditation should find the tool extremely useful for their own internal review.

This *Guide* can help you do any or all of the following:

- evaluate the effectiveness and viability of current activities at your school
- plan improvement of current operations
- assess the demand for new programs or directions
- plan new initiatives
- develop and maintain positive connections with your school’s parent organization, when applicable
- determine your organization’s readiness and—should you choose to apply—help you prepare for national accreditation through ACCPAS

From ACCPAS’s inception, the Arts Schools Network has been involved in drafting and revising accreditation standards, and it continues to support ACCPAS in the development and implementation of its accreditation system. The Arts Schools Network encourages member schools to pursue accreditation if they deem it appropriate as a means of developing and recognizing the achievements of the institution.

### **Using this *Guide***

*A Guide to Assessing Your Arts School* provides a basic framework for comprehensive review, in the form of a series of questions that explore the entire range of a school’s purpose and operations. The *Guide* does not attempt to compile or recapitulate the many concepts and techniques covered by existing literature on management, governance, fundraising, elementary/secondary education in the arts, etc. Rather, the *Guide* outlines a structure that helps you undertake your own analysis of your organization. Answering its questions enables you to develop comprehensive information as a basis for planning your next steps for improvement and determining the technical and tactical resources your organization needs. Just as a teacher may employ many methods in advancing students toward one specified goal, a good textbook allows for multiple approaches to its subject. While the *Guide* poses questions related to the operations and expectations of arts schools, it does not attempt to elicit common answers for all users.

You may not find it necessary to complete each section in a linear fashion. You are encouraged to adapt this resource to your own needs, perhaps completing some parts and not others. To mount a truly comprehensive assessment of your school, you will want to enlist the help of faculty, administrators, and other school stakeholders—as many as you can marshal. The *Guide* can be used and implemented during faculty workshops and retreats, board meetings, and in other professional development settings. Some schools find it useful to establish steering committees to conduct reviews. Thus the *Guide* is envisioned as modular. You are encouraged to photocopy



and share sections of it with every party who can offer knowledgeable feedback. For example, a director might give parts of the section on governance to the board or executive committee, which would use it as a tool to think through the questions in that section. The section on faculty and staff can be shared with program directors.

While it is written with existing schools in mind, the *Guide* also offers a valuable framework for developing new arts-focused schools.

### **Structure of the Document**

The *Guide* is structured to follow the Standards for Accreditation in the ACCPAS *Handbook*. Each section deals with a particular aspect of an arts school's purposes, operations, and programs. Again, you are encouraged to reorder sections or questions as you please, use only certain portions of the document, or develop new sections and questions as necessary to review your programs.

In order to facilitate multiple approaches to institutional review, two versions of the assessment guide are provided. Both versions follow an identical structure, although only the second contains the related ACCPAS standards statements. The short version of the guide consists of questions that are comprehensive and summative in nature. Questions found in the extended version are directed and specific to address individual issues. Please use either version of the assessment *Guide* that will be most useful in the evaluation of your institution, or feel free to modify or combine either set to fit your individual needs.

Question sets in the extended version of the *Guide* are structured as follows:

- **Key Considerations:** Questions intended to encourage reflection on a school's specific methods of addressing individual components of the particular area under review, through the prism of values espoused by Arts Schools Network members.
- **Contextual Considerations:** Questions inviting you to examine specific aspects of your operation in relation to the conditions existing both within your school and in its service area, both local and regional. (This category of question is not included in every section of the extended version since they apply more specifically to some topics than to others.)
- **Summary:** Designed to elicit your overall conclusions regarding your school's merits with respect to the function under consideration. For sections A and B, more interpretation is required than for the later sections, which are more factual. Therefore in A and B the summary takes the form of questions, while the rest of the sections request a summarizing statement of strengths and weaknesses.

Each section in the extended version also includes:

- **ACCPAS Standards:** ACCPAS requirements for accreditation
- **ACCPAS Guidelines and Recommendations:** description of conditions normally present when standards are met and recommendations for additional conditions of excellence that are not required for accreditation.

These are reprinted verbatim from the ACCPAS *Handbook* and are current as of August 2009. Except where noted, they apply to community arts schools and precollegiate arts schools alike, and are applied according to the purposes and offerings of each school.

## Defining an Arts School

This *Guide* defines an “arts school” as any school for children and youth with a mission that includes intensive education and training in the arts. This may include precollegiate arts schools in the PreK–12 sector that offer elementary, middle school, or secondary education, the high school diploma, or the arts component of a program that meets elementary/secondary education or high school diploma requirements of the states or other governing entities, arts magnet or charter schools, or other organizations.

No two arts schools are exactly alike, but their missions generally combine a commitment to artistic and educational excellence. Schools may operate independently or in connection with an overall governing body or host or parent organization. Some focus on one artistic discipline, others on a variety. Levels of access in certain schools may vary based on the school’s mission.

## Schools Affiliated with Overall Governing Bodies or Parent Organizations

When an arts school is affiliated with an overall governing body or parent organization, assessment should include an additional set of relationships. **Throughout this document, questions specifically targeted to such affiliated programs are printed in italics.**

## How Completing the Guide Can Advance Your School’s Accreditation

Schools applying for accreditation must complete the *ACCPAS Self-Study Document*, a workbook compatible with the *Guide* and similar in structure. In completing the *Guide*, you will have assembled most of the information and written responses required by the *Self-Study Document*. While the *Self-Study Document* requires additional documentation, the *Guide* makes no such requirements and may conceivably be sketched out by one individual in one sitting. For comparison purposes, the *ACCPAS Self-Study Document* is published at [www.arts-accredit.org](http://www.arts-accredit.org).

The *Guide* and the *ACCPAS Self-Study Document* may each stand on its own or be used together. You and your institution must decide which course is best, according to your goals and available resources. The following table may be helpful:

	Guide	ACCPAS Self-Study Document
Must be completed for ACCPAS accreditation	NO	YES
Documentation required	NO	YES
Two or more individuals must participate	NO	YES
Review may feasibly be carried out in one day	YES	NO
Written with direct participation by the Arts Schools Network	YES	YES

ACCPAS will not accept a completed *Guide* as a substitute for its *Self-Study Document*. However, schools wishing to use the *Guide* as the basis for their ACCPAS Self-Study should contact the ACCPAS National Office staff for assistance.

Materials for ACCPAS accreditation may be found at [www.arts-accredit.org](http://www.arts-accredit.org), including the latest edition of the ACCPAS *Handbook* (containing the Standards for Accreditation), and the ACCPAS Accreditation Procedures, which includes instructions for completing the *ACCPAS Self-Study Document*. To locate these documents, go to [www.arts-accredit.org](http://www.arts-accredit.org), click on “ACCPAS”, then on “Accreditation Materials.” All materials may be downloaded in PDF format, free of charge.

## Assessment *Guide* – Short Version

This short version of the *Guide* provides a brief evaluation tool for the examination of purposes, operations, and educational programs at your arts school. While each item below provides a series of points to consider in the evaluation of the item, the institution may wish provide a general assessment for each item in terms of:

- a. strengths;
- b. areas for improvement;
- c. consistency with school-wide or program purposes;
- d. questions;
- e. new aspirations; and
- f. future challenges;

If you are interested in examining issues in further depth, references to parallel sections in the extended version the assessment *Guide*, which includes ACCPAS standards statements, are provided following each item below.

There are various writing approaches that may be used in completing the guide, which will create texts of varying length and depth. When used as an internal evaluation document, very little description or reporting may be necessary. If the document is used to examine situations at your institution in great depth, more text may be required to fully describe the situation, any findings and/or projected actions.

### **Purposes and Operations**

#### A. Purposes of the School [*page 11*]

Describe and evaluate the school's purposes with regard to accuracy and applicability to the school's educational goals, relationship to decision making, planning, and evaluation of the school's operations and programs, communication of purposes to trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students, and applicability of the purposes to the school's efforts now and in the future.

#### B. Size and Scope [*page 15*]

Describe and evaluate the size and distribution of the school's students and faculty in relation to the scope of the programs offered. Relate this item and your response directly to the purposes of the school. Consider whether numbers of faculty and students are sufficient to support present educational programs. It may also be useful to project this evaluation at various intervals into the future.

#### C. Finances [*page 18*]

Describe and evaluate the finances of the institution in relation to the school's purposes and its size and scope. Consider present and projected funding, and any possible or proposed changes to operations, faculty, or educational programs that may change the financial situation. Provide an examination of funding sources and systems for making financial decisions.

#### D. Governance and Administrative Structures [*page 20*]

Describe and evaluate the school's form of governance and its administrative structures. The evaluation should include governance and administration's ability to support the purposes of the school, the school's size and scope, its educational programs, and allocation and management of resources.

E. Faculty and Staff *[page 25]*

Describe and evaluate the school's faculty and staff with regard to number, qualifications, relation to administrative structures, policies for full-time, part-time, or adjunct status, faculty development, compensation, advancement, workloads, hiring, promotion and tenure, faculty leadership, and student advising.

F. Facilities, Equipment, Health, and Safety *[page 30]*

Describe and evaluate the school's facilities and equipment with regard to adequacy to support the size and scope of the institution and programs offered. Include a discussion of maintenance and repair schedules and systems, and systems for assessing need for and securing additional or upgraded facilities and equipment. Describe and evaluate the school's policies and procedures regarding health and safety, including emergency response plans.

G. Learning and Information Resources *[page 33]*

Describe and evaluate the school's learning and information resources with regard to access, adequacy to support programs, financial resources devoted to learning and information resources, and any established relationships to other library holdings. Include a projection for needs and allocation for the future.

H. Recruitment, Auditions and Portfolio Reviews, Enrollment, Financial Aid, Retention, Recordkeeping, and Advancement *[page 35]*

Describe and evaluate the school's policies and procedures regarding recruitment, auditions and portfolio reviews, enrollment, financial aid, retention, recordkeeping, and advisement. Include in this discussion an evaluation of operations in these areas and their benefit to students and educational programs.

I. Published Materials and Websites *[page 39]*

Describe and evaluate the school's catalogues, handbooks, Web sites, published calendars, syllabi, and any other publications or printed/electronic resources. Include in this discussion an evaluation of content, clarity, accuracy, availability, and usefulness for students, parents, faculty, and any other involved parties.

J. Branch Campuses and Extension and Affiliate Programs *[page 41]*

Describe and evaluate any relationships between the school and a branch campus, extension, affiliate, or satellite program. The branch program and its relationship to the parent institution may additionally be evaluated with regard to all lettered items in this area (purposes, size and scope, finances, governance and administration, etc.). Include in this discussion an evaluation of shared faculty and resources, overall governing structures, and communication systems.

K. Community Involvement *[page 45]*

Describe and evaluate the school's policies and approaches to community involvement. Include in this discussion an evaluation of any relationships to local arts and arts education communities, relationships to the school's purposes, involvement of school personnel, and any relationships of community involvement to fundraising, promotion or development for the school.

L. Relationship with Parents/Guardians *[page 47]*

Describe and evaluate the school's communications with parents or guardians of students. Consider both communications to parents and guardians regarding issues at the school, its mission or programs, and student progress, as well as the school's procedure for receiving comments from parents and guardians.

M. Evaluation, Planning, and Projections *[page 49]*

Describe and evaluate the school's policies, procedures, and execution of evaluation, planning, and projections with regard to consistency with the school's purposes and size and scope. Include in this discussion an evaluation of the focus given to student achievement and educational programs, usefulness of institutional and programmatic evaluations in advancement of the work of the institution and changes to educational programs, and an assessment of any instructional and/or student evaluations.

**Specific Arts Discipline Programs** *[page 53]*

For each educational program offered, describe and evaluate the specific program's purposes, operations, program content, students (levels of artistry and involvement), objectives for student learning, policies and procedures regarding performance or exhibition, procedures for evaluation of student progress and program performance, any relationships between the program and other external programs, and long-range planning for the program. Include in this discussion an evaluation of the relationships between these areas to the overall school, its purposes, operations, and other educational programs.

**Summary**

Provide a summary of the findings of this evaluation process. This may be a description of levels of achievement, relationships of parts to other parts and to the institution as a whole, prospects for necessary future changes, viability of educational programs, action plans, areas for further investigation, etc. The summary will necessarily vary based on the objectives for this assessment and the individual situations found at your arts school.

# Assessment Guide – Extended Version

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### A. Purposes of the School

The questions in this section are designed to help you describe the overall goals, objectives, mission, or vision of your school and relate these to your programming activities, planning, and decision-making.

#### Key Considerations

1. What are the published purposes of the arts school?
2. Do the published purposes effectively express the school’s educational goals?
3. Is the mission statement truly guiding the school? To what extent is your mission the basis for:
  - a. making decisions about the scope and content of curricular offerings;
  - b. long-range planning, including the development of new programs, innovative activities, expansion and reduction of programs;
  - c. operational decisions with respect to enrollment, selection of faculty and staff, and allocation of resources?
4. How does the school promote a common understanding of purposes among constituents—faculty, students, parents, administration?
5. Who is responsible for communicating the school’s purposes? How effectively is this responsibility being carried out?
6. How does the school evaluate its effectiveness in communicating its purposes to its various constituencies?
7. Can the school carry out its published purposes under current conditions?
8. When was the last major review of the school’s purposes? What prompted the review, and what were the results?
9. Have the school’s overall purposes remained constant over time? What is the probability that they will remain constant?
10. *How are the school’s published statements and purposes, and the answers to the questions above, related to the purposes of the overall governing body or parent organization and the practical considerations it faces? What degree of autonomy does the school have in setting its overall purposes?*

#### Contextual Considerations

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the school’s primary service area? This may include the immediate region, or the constituency it serves.

2. What other local organizations and individuals provide programs that could be described as being focused on “arts education”? What interactions or overlaps exist, and how might this affect your institution?
3. What is the nature and organization of the professional arts community in your area? What is its current or potential relationship to the arts school?
4. What is the nature and scope of arts programs in any other local or regional arts schools? What are the current and potential relationships of other arts school programs to your school and its programs?
5. What state or regional conditions affect your school’s ability to offer arts education programs (e.g., similar offerings in nearby institutions, special needs in the region, governing and funding agencies beyond the institution)?
6. What other arts schools have had an influence on the development of your school?
7. Has the school used the resources available to it through the Arts Schools Network? (*See page 66*).
8. What national conditions affect the school’s ability to offer arts education programs (e.g., demographics, economics, cultural directions)?

### **Summary Questions**

1. Is it time to establish or amend the school’s purposes?
2. What does your assessment reveal about future challenges?
3. What does it suggest regarding new aspirations for your school?

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### A. Purposes of the School

#### ACCPAS STANDARDS

- A. Each school chooses the specific terminology it uses to state its purposes. Although terms such as vision, mission, goals, objectives, and action plans are widely used, they and the structures they imply are not required.
- B. There must be at least one or more statements indicating overall purposes. Standards regarding purposes for specific curricular programs are found in the section on Arts Discipline Programs, [Section III of the *Handbook*].
- C. In multipurpose institutions such as those offering general education, the overall purposes of the arts teaching components must have a viable relationship to the purposes of the institution as a whole.
- D. Statements regarding overall purposes must:
  1. indicate that fundamental purposes are educational;
  2. encompass and be appropriate to the level(s) of program or curricular offerings;
  3. be consistent with specific institutional and programmatic responsibilities and aspirations for teaching and learning in one or more art forms;
  4. be compatible with ACCPAS standards;
  5. be published and made available in one or more texts appropriate for various constituencies, including the general public;
  6. guide and influence decision making, analysis, and planning, including each of these as they shape and fulfill relationships among curricular offerings, operational matters, and resources;
  7. be used to determine the extent to which policies, practices, resources, and curricular and other program components work together conceptually, structurally, and operationally to achieve stated expectations for teaching and learning.



## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### A. Purposes of the School

#### ACCPAS GUIDELINES, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND COMMENT

- A. There are numerous specific definitions of common terms, but usually:
1. *purposes* is a generic term referring to statements that when reviewed together, define the special, perhaps unique, function of an institution or program in the larger context of educational and artistic endeavor;
  2. *vision statements* normally define what an entity aspires to be and, often, who it intends to serve;
  3. *mission statements* articulate broad connections between the institution's efforts in specific arts disciplines and the world of art and intellect;
  4. *goals* are broad statements of aim, the specific needs toward which efforts are directed, normally less remote and more definitive than mission;
  5. *objectives* are the specific steps for reaching goals, normally measured in time among other indicators;
  6. *action plans* are specific means for achieving objectives, normally measured in dollars among other indicators.
- B. Areas normally addressed in statements of purposes include, but are not limited to: specific arts disciplines; students and communities to be served; learning; teaching; creative work and research; service; performance; and the policies and resources needed for effectiveness in these areas.
- C. To guide and influence the work of community/precollegiate arts schools, statements of purposes are normally the basis for:
1. creating a common conceptual framework for all participants;
  2. making educational and artistic decisions;
  3. long range planning, including the development of new curricula, innovative activities, expansion or reduction of programs or enrollments;
  4. operational decisions, including admission practices, selection of faculty and staff, allocation of resources, evaluation, and administrative policies.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **B. Size and Scope**

Size usually refers to numbers of students and faculty; scope, to the range and number of programs offered. The questions in this section focus on whether the school's enrollment is sufficient to support its programming goals and objectives.

#### **Key Considerations**

1. How do the size and scope of each educational offering at your school relate to and/or embody the purposes of (a) the school; (b) *the overall governing body or parent organization*?
2. Are the size and scope of your programs adequate to maintain a community of students and faculty in specific areas of study (e.g., specialized ensembles, dance productions, theatre productions)? How important is community-making to the success of the school?
3. How do the size and scope of the school's programs relate to instructional format? For example, among your mix of private and group lessons, studio classes, lecture or seminar classes, tutorials, ensembles, master classes, individual projects, etc., where is student demand the highest? Where is the highest-quality instruction happening? Where is the best potential for growth?
4. What projections are made regularly about the size and scope of the school? How steady and reliable are your resources, particularly in regard to key faculty positions?
5. *How do size and scope issues in your arts school relate to size, scope, and resource issues in the overall governing body or parent organization? What degree of autonomy does the school have in adjusting the size and scope of its programs?*

#### **Contextual Considerations**

1. Describe the arts education landscape in your community. What is your school's potential for enhancing it? For example, what specific community-wide conditions, goals, and objectives exist regarding:
  - a. arts education in early childhood;
  - b. arts education in other elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools;
  - c. community arts schools;
  - d. out-of-school-time arts education;
  - e. collegiate and conservatory arts programs;
  - f. arts education for young adults, adults, and seniors;
  - g. community resources for the arts and arts education?

2. What is your school's current and potential role in preparing future professional artists?
  - a. What combination of offerings in performance and practice, artistic skills, analysis, history, etc., do you offer pre-professionals? Are curricula designed for various age levels?
  - b. To what extent does your school design programs for pre-professionals vs. recreational artists?
  - c. How effective are other pre-professional arts activities in your community? How great is the demand for more?
3. What is the demand among community service and social service programs for arts education programs that your school might provide through outreach (e.g., arts-in-education partnerships with public schools, collaboration with daycare and after-school programs, mentoring programs, adult or eldercare programs, artists-in-residence programs, community events or beautification)?
  - a. What kind of relationship can be managed best by your school and its partner: a permanent school branch, a long-term partnership, or a short-term collaboration?
  - b. How does outreach fit into your school's program mix? Do outreach programs connect with the mission of the school and contribute to achieving overall goals, or are they a distraction? Are your school's resources adequate for maintaining outreach programs to their full term?

### **Summary Questions**

1. To what extent do your school's programs meet the current demand and anticipate future needs?
2. Is it time to grow or reduce particular programs? If so, how might such action remain consistent with the school's overall purposes?

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **B. Size and Scope**

#### **ACCPAS STANDARDS**

Schools shall maintain sufficient enrollment to support the specific programs offered including:

- A. An appropriate number of faculty and other resources;
- B. Offerings such as lessons, classes, ensembles, and presentation opportunities when published as being available or as the necessary component of an educational program.

#### **ACCPAS GUIDELINES**

Schools are expected to demonstrate a positive and functioning relationship among the size and scope of arts programs, the goals and objectives of these programs, and the human, material, and fiscal resources available to support these programs.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### C. Finances

Questions here explore whether the school has financial resources adequate to support its general and specific purposes and its size and scope.

#### Key Considerations

1. Provide a concise description of the financial state of the school, including an analysis of the past three years of finances. If the school has operated with deficits or experienced cuts to important programs during this period, describe why they occurred and how they are being addressed.
2. Describe the financial controls in place, including all individuals with responsibility for finances. For analytical purposes, it is useful to have detailed budgets for two previous years (including actual results), the current year, and the next year.
3. What is the relationship of present and projected funding to (a) the purposes of your school; and (b) the size and scope of its programs? How are you integrating funding projections into long-term planning?
4. For each of your school's programs, do your financial projections support (a) the program's viability and/or (b) plans to expand or decrease it?
5. How are basic funding decisions made?
6. How effective is the school in maintaining and growing its funding base? How effectively does the school use its funds?
7. If your school requires tuition and offers financial assistance for students, how is the financial aid program funded? What percentage of total tuition revenue is allocated for need-based financial aid? How does the institution determine appropriate levels of need-based financial aid and structure the way such aid is given?
8. How does your school defray costs not covered by typical funding sources (taxes, tuition, fees, other external funding)? Are funds raised from (a) *the public and/or private sectors outside the institution or overall governing body*, (b) *subsidies within the institution as a whole*, or (c) other sources?
9. What mechanisms are in place to secure necessary income beyond typical funding sources (e.g., patron societies, parent support groups, public events, operation of a fundraising or development program)? How effective are they? *How are these mechanisms related to the promotion and development responsibilities of the overall governing or funding body, or the school as a whole?*

#### Summary

With regard to finances, summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with school-wide or specific program purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?

For additional questions regarding financial aid, see Section H, Recruitment, Auditions and Portfolio Reviews, Enrollment, Financial Aid, Retention, Recordkeeping, and Advancement (page 35), and for fundraising, Section K, Community Involvement (page 45).
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## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### C. Finances

#### ACCPAS STANDARDS

- A. Financial resources shall be adequate in terms of:
  - 1. the purposes of the school and each of the specific arts programs it offers; and
  - 2. the size and scope of the school.
- B. Budget allocations for personnel, space, equipment, and materials must be appropriate and sufficient to sustain the programs offered from year to year.
- C. Evidence must be provided demonstrating that financial support is sufficient to ensure continued operation of the school and its programs in accordance with applicable ACCPAS standards for the projected period of accreditation.
- D. The school shall publish all regulations and policies concerning tuition, fees, and other charges, and those concerning financial aid. If tuition is charged, it shall develop a tuition refund policy that is equitable to both the institution and the student.
- E. The school shall maintain accurate financial records according to legal and ethical standards of recognized accounting practice.
  - 1. For privately supported schools this means an annual audit with opinion prepared by an independent certified public accountant. Such audit is normally completed within 120 days, and must be completed within 180 days, after the close of each fiscal year.
  - 2. For tax-supported schools, this means a periodic audit with opinion or a review as mandated by the legislative or executive branch of the government entity supporting the institution.
- F. The audited financial statements of the school shall reveal sound financial management in support of the educational program.
- G. Evidence of past and potential financial stability and long-range fiscal and financial planning must be demonstrated.

#### ACCPAS GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Student learning and health and safety are paramount considerations in determining and evaluating financial support.
- B. Fiscal and financial planning, especially for the long-term, should be correlated with current and evolving purposes and content of the school and its arts programs.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **D. Governance and Administrative Structures**

Questions here evaluate the ability of your school's form of governance and its administrative structures to support the school's teaching and learning objectives and its overall purpose. The term "administration" below refers to the way various duties and administrative functions are distributed among the principals, superintendents, board of directors, CEO, program directors, etc.

#### **Key Considerations**

1. What are your school's primary governance mechanisms?
  - a. What patterns of authority and responsibility are evident in the documents and procedures related to governing the school? For example, do they clearly delineate policy-making and operational authority for such groups as administrators, faculty, and funding sources?
  - b. How consistent are these structural principles with the purposes established for the arts school? In particular, how do these principles relate to artistic and educational aspirations for the program?
  - c. How well are these structural principles and the rationales for them stated in writing and understood by those with governance, administration, and teaching responsibilities?
2. How do these governance mechanisms relate to the size and scope of the school and its programs?
3. Are these governance mechanisms appropriate to the size and scope of the school and its programs?
4. What is your school's administrative structure? What role in this structure is played by faculty?
5. How well does your school's administrative structure allow for:
  - a. a climate conducive to cultural and intellectual growth;
  - b. effective communication among constituents of the school;
  - c. evaluation and accountability mechanisms;
  - d. the school's position as a cultural leader in the community;
  - e. *the school's position as a cultural leader within its overall governing body or parent institution?*
6. What is the role of school administration in allocating and deploying resources? Are the persons making allocation decisions those who are most accountable for the success of the school?

7. What degree of authority does the administration of your school have over educational programs, students, faculty, and operational elements such as budget, recordkeeping, recruitment, facilities, and equipment management? How is this authority profile consistent with purposes and structural principles?

### **Summary**

With regard to governance and administration, summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with school-wide or specific program purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?



## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### D. Governance and Administrative Structures

#### ACCPAS STANDARDS

ACCPAS standards and guidelines relating to governance and administration appear both in the main standards text of the *AACPAS Handbook* and in appendices. The source of each standard taken from an appendix is noted.

- A. Governance and administrative structures and activities shall:
1. serve and work to fulfill the purposes of the school.
  2. assure fundamental educational, artistic, administrative, and financial continuity and stability, and show evidence of long-range planning.
  3. include a board with legal and financial responsibilities and adequate public representation. Examples are a board of trustees, a board of directors, a school board.
  4. exhibit relationships among board members, administration, faculty, staff, and students that demonstrate a primary focus on support of teaching and learning:
    - a. the board is legally constituted to hold the property, assets, and purposes of the institution in trust with responsibility for sustaining the institution and exercising ultimate and general control over its affairs;
    - b. the administration is empowered by the board to operate the school, provide optimum circumstances for faculty and students to carry out these purposes, and provide effective communications channels both inside and outside the school;
    - c. the faculty has a major role in developing the artistic and academic program and in evaluating and influencing the standards and conditions that pertain directly to instruction, creative work, and research; and
    - d. students' and parents'/guardians' views and judgments are sought as applicable in those matters in which they have a direct and reasonable interest.
- B. The governance and administrative relationships of each organizational component of the school, including the process by which they function and interrelate, shall be stated clearly in written form.
1. Administrators, faculty, and staff shall understand their duties and responsibilities and know the individuals to whom they are responsible.
  2. The school executive's responsibilities shall be clearly delineated and executive authority shall be commensurate with responsibility.
  3. In multidisciplinary institutions, the arts programs must have adequate representation to deliberative bodies whose work has a direct impact on their educational and artistic endeavors and results.
- C. The administration must provide mechanisms for communication among all components of the school.
- D. A not-for-profit institution must have a governing board (for example: board of directors, board of trustees, school board) consisting of at least five members which has the duty and authority to ensure that the overall mission of the institution is carried out. The governing board must be the legal body responsible for the institution which it holds in trust. The presiding officer of the board, along with a majority of other voting members, must have no contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution. The board must have adequate representation of the

public interest recognizing that institutions serve a public purpose when they provide educational services and opportunities. Public representatives receive no financial benefit from the operation of the institution. [Appendix I.A.(I)(C)(1)]

- E. For all institutions, the duties of the board include securing financial resources to support the achievement of institutional mission, goals, and objectives. The board is responsible for approving the annual budget, reviewing periodic fiscal audits, participating in and overseeing any non-tuition revenue gathering and management, and approving the specific or applicable long-range financial plan. [Appendix I.A.(I)(C)(2)]
- F. In all institutions, the board shall maintain policies concerning conflict of interest, both with respect to its own actions and to actions of administration, faculty, and staff. [Appendix I.A.(I)(C)(3)]
- G. All institutions must have and state, in an official document, policies that define board size, duties, responsibilities, and operations. These include the number of members, length of service, rotation, policies, organization, and committee structure for overseeing areas such as finance, governing properties, programs, and frequency of regular scheduled meetings. Board policies shall clearly state that no member or committee acts in place of the board, except by formal delegation of authority by majority vote of the board of directors. [Appendix I.A.(I)(C)(4)]
- H. If the institution is involved with multi-campus, off-campus, continuing education, evening and weekend programs, etc., governance and administrative procedures must be clearly defined and appropriately integrated and incorporated into the total governance and administration system. [Appendix I.A.(I)(C)(5)]
- I. In all not-for-profit institutions, the institution must have a paid chief executive officer whose primary responsibility is to the institution and who is a full-time employee of the institution. The board selects and regularly evaluates the institution's chief executive officer using consultative mechanisms described in the official document outlining duties of the board. The chief executive officer must not be the presiding officer of the board, but may be an *ex officio* member of the board. The board must delegate to the chief executive officer and, as appropriate, to other officers whose primary responsibilities are to the institution, the requisite authority and autonomy to manage the institution effectively and formulate and implement policies compatible with the overall structures and intents established by the board. [Appendix I.A.(I)(C)(6)]
- J. For all institutions, the administrative structure of the institution must be sufficient in size and competence to cover business, registrar, maintenance, security, safety, and student services functions. The institution shall have appropriate administrative and physical capabilities to protect the permanent records of students and any other permanent records as board policies may dictate. [Appendix I.A.(I)(C)(7)]
- K. Proprietary institutions shall demonstrate that the school is under the guidance of a Board of Directors, at least one-third of whom shall have no financial investment in the institution, and at least two-thirds of whom shall have no kinship with the principal owners. The membership of the Board shall reflect the public interest. This is to assure that the governing body includes individuals who do not represent per se the interests of the administration, faculty, or students, or of the proprietors; and that such representation is not merely a token representation but has an effective, although not necessarily a majority, vote in the affairs of the governing body. [Appendix I.B.(I)(b)]
- L. Proprietary institutions shall demonstrate the existence of clearly defined roles based upon individual qualifications for the owner(s), manager(s), administrative personnel, and faculty. [Appendix I.B.(I)(f)]

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **D. Governance and Administrative Structures**

#### **ACCPAS GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A. Normally, in community schools, stakeholders such as residents of the community and representatives of school constituencies are members of the board, and the composition of the board reflects the community served by the school.
- B. Normally, the school executive exercises leadership in program evaluation and planning, encourages faculty development, and promotes among all faculty and staff a spirit of responsibility, understanding, and cooperation.
- C. The school executive should nurture an environment that contributes to the school's pursuit of its artistic, intellectual, and educational purposes.
- D. Written descriptions of governance and administrative relationships should be publicly available.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **E. Faculty and Staff**

The success of any arts school is largely dependent on the quality of its faculty and staff. Their background, experience, and leadership will determine the level of excellence the program can achieve. (For purposes of this document, the chief executive officer of the school is not defined as “staff.”)

The questions below explore how well the qualifications of the school’s faculty and staff, their number, and the administrative structures under which they work support the school’s educational mission.

#### **Key Considerations**

Describe the structure of the faculty and staff at your school. Does that structure support the school’s purposes?

1. Faculty
  - a. What qualifications are expected of faculty? What contractual arrangements (e.g., health insurance, professional development, and other benefits) are available?
  - b. What policies and procedures cover full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty status? How effective are these policies and procedures in supporting the purposes of the school?
  - c. What policies and procedures are used to select faculty for teaching, leadership, counseling, and administrative roles? Who determines these policies and procedures and how? How are policies and procedures for hiring/promotion related to (1) the school’s overall purposes and (2) the size and scope of its programs? Are there formal job descriptions, and if so, how extensive are they?
  - d. What mechanisms are in place to encourage ongoing faculty development? To what extent does the school encourage faculty performance/exhibition, creation of new work, scholarship, and research?
  - e. How are minimum and maximum teaching loads determined? To what extent do the formulas used support the goals and objectives of the various arts programs?
  - f. Does your school provide mentors or other assistance to faculty new to teaching, or new to this type of school? How effective are these mechanisms?
  - g. How are compensation decisions reached? Is peer review involved? How is compensation linked to teaching load and performance evaluation?
  - h. How do members of your faculty and administration, both individually and as a group, exert leadership in their areas of expertise (1) locally, (2) regionally, and (3) nationally? Is an individual’s level of leadership taken into consideration in decisions about hiring, promotion, and retention/tenure?
  - i. What faculty promotion and retention policies are in place? How do those policies relate to the school’s overall purposes and program objectives? How do

you ensure, in the school's financial accounting and in other forms of accounting, that resources are available to fulfill these policies?

- j. How effectively do faculty handbooks or other means of communication clarify faculty duties, regulations, and policies?
- k. *Are faculty handbooks or other means of communication consistent with similar documents and policies in effect for faculty in the overall governing body or parent organization?*

## 2. Staff

- a. What qualifications are expected of staff? What contractual arrangements (e.g., professional development, flexible scheduling, telecommuting) are available?
- b. What policies and procedures are used to select staff for support, administrative, and leadership roles? Who determines these policies and procedures and how? How are policies and procedures for hiring/promotion related to (1) the school's overall purposes and (2) the size and scope of its programs? Are there formal job descriptions, and if so, how extensive are they?
- c. What mechanisms are in place to encourage ongoing staff development?
- d. Does your school provide mentors or other assistance to staff persons new to working in an arts education environment? How effective are these mechanisms?
- e. Does the school provide managers with information and tools associated with their responsibilities (e.g., professional association membership, best practices guides, fundraising literature, instructional technology)?
- f. How are compensation decisions reached? Is peer review involved? How is compensation linked to responsibilities?
- g. How effectively do staff handbooks or other means of communication clarify staff duties, regulations, and policies?
- h. How are staff workloads determined?

### **Summary**

With regard to faculty and staff, summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with school-wide or specific program purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### E. Faculty and Staff

#### ACCPAS STANDARDS

The ACCPAS standards and guidelines in this area are presented in eight sections.

##### I. Qualifications

###### A. Standards

1. The school shall maintain faculties and staff whose aggregate individual qualifications enable the school and the specific educational programs offered to accomplish their purposes.
2. Faculty members (including part-time faculty) shall be qualified by earned degrees and/or professional experience and/or demonstrated teaching competence for the subjects and levels they are teaching.
3. All faculty must be able to guide student learning and to communicate personal knowledge and experience effectively.

###### B. Guidelines, Recommendations, and Comment

1. Standard I.A. above [Standard II.E. I.a. of the *Handbook*] applies to studies and coursework taken at the school or under cooperative arrangements with another educational or performing institution, or in any other third-party arrangement.
2. Teachers of creation and/or performance in the arts normally are, or have been, deeply involved as practicing artists and teachers in the specific disciplines or specializations they are teaching.
3. Academic degrees are a pertinent indicator of the teacher's qualifications for instructing in theoretical, historical, and pedagogical subjects associated with the arts.

##### 2. Number and Distribution

###### A. Standards

1. The number of faculty positions must be (a) sufficient to achieve the school's purposes, (b) appropriate to the size and scope of the school's programs, and (c) consistent with the nature and requirements of specific programs offered.
2. The school must have clear, published definitions of any faculty classifications in use (for example, full-time, part-time, and visiting).
3. A school shall distinguish in its printed literature between regular and guest faculty. For these purposes, regular faculty shall be defined as those employed to teach on a regularly scheduled basis (at least biweekly) throughout a program of study.

###### B. Recommendation

Multiple faculty involved in any specific area of specialization should represent a diversity of background and experience in their field of expertise.

### **3. Appointment, Evaluation, and Advancement**

#### **A. Standards**

1. The school must have or be subject to procedures for appointing, evaluating, advancing, and compensating faculty that promote objectivity and that ensure appropriate connections between personnel decisions and purposes, especially as aspirations and purposes concern teaching, creative work, performance, research, scholarship, and service.
2. The school must have procedures for the regular evaluation of all faculty.

#### **B. Guidelines and Recommendation**

Effective and fair evaluation of faculty and staff is based on clear and accurate statements regarding responsibilities and expectations made at the time of employment and subsequently. Normally, elements, perspectives, and priorities used to determine the quality of faculty and staff work are articulated as clearly as possible.

### **4. Responsibilities and Time Conditions**

#### **A. Standards**

1. Faculty assignments shall be such that faculty members are able to carry out their duties effectively.
2. Faculty members shall have adequate time to prepare and provide effective instruction, advise and evaluate students, continue professional growth, and participate in service activities expected by the school.

#### **B. Guidelines, Recommendations, and Comment**

1. Institutions use a variety of methods for calculating teaching loads. The choice of method is the prerogative of the institution.
2. The teaching responsibilities of those having administrative and consultative duties should be carefully developed to ensure an effective balance between teaching and administration.

### **5. Student/Faculty Ratio**

#### **A. Standard**

The student/faculty ratio must be consistent with the size, scope, goals, and the specific purposes and requirements of the programs offered.

### **6. Class Size**

#### **A. Standards**

1. When classes are offered, their size shall be appropriate to the subject matter and instructional form of each class, with regard to such considerations as materials and equipment requirements, safety, and the amount of student and faculty time necessary to accomplish the purpose of the class.
2. When individual faculty attention to an individual student work is required during class, class size shall be such that students can receive regular critiques of meaningful duration during the regular class period.

## **7. Faculty Development**

### A. Standard

Schools must encourage continuing professional development, even if funding is limited.

### B. Recommendation and Comment

A. Professional leaves; participation in activities that foster exchanges of ideas; cooperative activities and research, scholarship, and course preparation support are encouraged.

B. Whatever the institution's faculty development policies and mechanisms, the primary initiative for professional growth rests with each faculty member.

## **8. Support Staff**

### A. Standard

Support staff shall be provided commensurate with the school's purposes, size, and scope, and programs in the arts disciplines.

### B. Guideline

Secretarial, technical, production, artistic, and other types of staff are included in the scope of Standard A above [Standard II.E.8.a of the *Handbook*].



## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **F. Facilities, Equipment, Health, and Safety**

This section enables you to evaluate whether the school's facilities are adequate to support the specific types of programs offered, the equipment is sufficient and up to date, and proper attention is given to maintaining health and safety standards.

#### **Key Considerations**

1. Are facilities adequate for the size and scope of the school?
2. What criteria does the school use to determine whether space is adequate for the various functions of the school? How often does the school formally address the issue of space? Who is included in the discussions?
3. Describe your school's program for building maintenance and repair. How effective is it?
4. If any facilities are found to be inadequate in any way, how are the current facilities being sustained for the time being, and what plans are in place to improve the situation?
5. Is equipment adequate for the size and scope of the school?
6. Describe your school's program for equipment maintenance and repair. How effective is it?
7. Does your school evaluate equipment needs on a continuing basis? How effective are the evaluation mechanisms?
8. If any equipment is found to be inadequate, how is the current equipment being sustained for the time being, and what plans are in place to improve the situation?
9. If your institution has a responsibility for a museum or fine arts collection, what issues do you see in areas such as insurance, maintenance, management, acquisitions, and preservation?
10. If facilities and/or equipment are shared, how effective are mechanisms for scheduling the use of space, supplies, and equipment?
11. Besides school uses, how do your school's facilities and equipment contribute to the cultural life of the community?
12. Describe your policies and procedures with regard to health and safety, including emergency response plans. How often does the school formally address health and safety issues? Who is included in the discussions?

#### **Summary**

With regard to facilities, equipment, and health and safety, summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with school-wide or specific program purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### F. Facilities, Equipment, Health, and Safety

#### ACCPAS STANDARDS

- A. Facilities and equipment shall be adequate to support teaching and learning in all curricular offerings and for all faculty and students engaged in them, and be appropriately specialized consistent with the nature and levels of programs offered.
  1. As applicable to school offerings, facilities include but are not limited to studios, classrooms, and spaces for performance, exhibition, and administration. Facilities may also include spaces for costume and scene construction, student practice rooms, ensemble rehearsal rooms, computer facilities, maintenance and storage facilities, and dressing and shower facilities.
  2. As applicable to school offerings, equipment includes but is not limited to materials, equipment, and technology for production in the visual arts; acoustic and electronic instruments; computers; audio and video playback equipment; lighting equipment; set construction equipment; supplies; and audio-visual aids.
- B. Space allotted to any teaching and learning function must be adequate for the effective conduct of that function.
- C. Budget plans and provisions shall be made for adequate maintenance of the physical plant and for adequate acquisition, maintenance, and replacement of equipment.
- D. Schools with goals and objectives in art disciplines or specializations that require constant updating of equipment must demonstrate their capacity to remain technologically current.
- E. All instructional facilities shall be accessible, safe, and secure, and shall meet the standards of local fire and health codes.
- F. Ventilation, acoustical, and safety treatments shall be provided as appropriate to the disciplines offered.
- G. Schools with programs in the visual arts, or in costumes or set construction, must apprise all students, faculty, and staff engaged in these programs of health and safety hazards and procedures inherent in the use of materials and equipment associated with such programs; the school must provide instruction in the proper handling of materials and equipment as applicable to the nature and level of student engagement.
- H. Schools must have specific procedures to protect the health and safety of their students, including clearly defined emergency response plans.
- I. Schools must have a plan for reviewing and addressing health and safety issues on a regular basis.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **F. Facilities, Equipment, Health, and Safety**

#### **ACCPAS GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A. Normally, the school maintains a multi-year plan for the regular upkeep of its facilities and upkeep and replacement of equipment. The plan is developed consistent with purposes, the size and scope of the school, programs offered, and prospective changes.
- B. All facilities and equipment should produce an environment conducive to learning and be sufficient to enable faculty and students to focus on artistic and academic endeavors.
- C. If applicable to program offerings, provisions should be made for students to have access to adequate facilities at times other than regularly scheduled classes.
- D. Schools should assist students to acquire knowledge from qualified professionals and authoritative medical sources regarding the maintenance of professional health and the prevention of injuries.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **G. Learning and Information Resources**

The questions below focus on whether the school's library and/or other information resources are sufficient to support its programs and the needs of students and faculty.

#### **Key Considerations**

1. Does your school have a text describing, documenting, and evaluating student library and/or information resource services available at the school or off-site? What feedback has the text received from students?
2. Describe, evaluate, and project library holdings (including electronic or other access to holdings outside the school) in relation to the needs of (a) students, (b) faculty, and (c) curricular offerings and levels. Include hours of availability and staff resources allocated to this area. Consider in your evaluation necessary classroom resources and supplementary resources. If the learning and information resources have a connection to curricular issues, what procedures are in place to connect curricular planning and decisions about acquisitions and maintenance of the collections or holdings.
3. If community library facilities or other information resources are used by your faculty and/or students,
  - a. How close are these facilities to the school?
  - b. Are resources plentiful for all curricular offerings and levels?
  - c. What agreements between your school and the library facility are in place regarding use by your students/faculty?
4. How much does your school budget for acquisitions in the arts disciplines offered? For example, provide a breakdown with expenditures (a) last year, and (b) budgeted for this year in the following categories: books, slides, collected editions, periodicals, videotapes, scores, recordings, microfilm/microfiche, electronic access, other holdings (specify). Also provide a total for each year.

#### **Summary**

With regard to learning and information resources, summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with school-wide or specific program purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **G. Learning and Information Resources**

#### **ACCPAS STANDARDS**

- A. Adequate library and/or learning and/or information resources (for example, library materials, electronic access, teaching collections) must be readily available to support both the programs offered and the needs of faculty and enrolled students.
- B. Learning materials must be current and relevant to the programs offered.
- C. Schools providing access to learning resources off-site must demonstrate that the collection is adequate to support the program, and that policies and procedures for access are appropriate to the needs of the students and faculty.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **H. Recruitment, Auditions and Portfolio Reviews, Enrollment, Financial Aid, Retention, Recordkeeping, and Advisement**

The questions here evaluate a range of administrative policies related to students: recruitment, auditions and portfolio reviews, admission, advising, retention, and recording educational progress, as well as offering financial aid.

#### **Key Considerations**

1. What are your school's enrollment policies and procedures? Discuss their role in developing a group of students compatible with the arts purposes of your school.
2. Describe any recruitment policies and procedures. How are these compatible with the school's purposes?
3. What are the institution's policies and procedures for auditions, interviews, and/or portfolio reviews and acceptance into arts programs? Are these consistent with the school's purposes, size and scope requirements, and level of training the school intends to offer?
4. What demographics or ethnicity initiatives are present at your institution? Are these consistent with the school's mission and programs?
5. What is the distribution of staff and/or faculty responsibilities for recruitment and enrollment? How effective is this distribution? What do staff and faculty say about their experiences in this area?
6. How effective are recruitment and enrollment efforts in meeting the size and scope requirements of your school and its programs?
7. If your school offers financial aid, what are its financial aid policies and procedures? How are these determined? What is the school's system for administering financial aid? How successful is your financial aid program at recruiting and retaining students? If the school uses a sliding scale, what are its features and how is it developed?
8. If your school offers financial aid, what is the relationship between your school's financial aid program and the economic characteristics of the community you serve?
9. What mechanisms are in place regarding retention of students (a) in the school as a whole; (b) in specific courses of study?
10. What is the average length of time students remain enrolled in the school? If applicable, what is the school's method for addressing issues of dropout and graduation?
11. Are there systems in place for regular reviews of student retention? For example, is retention calculated, evaluated, and discussed annually?
12. What are the institution's policies and procedures for recordkeeping? How effectively does your school maintain consistent records useful to students, parents, and other constituencies?

13. Is the recordkeeping program related to the purposes of your school and its programs?
14. How do you collect and apply data to evaluate your school's continuing relationship to its community?

**Summary**

With regard to recruitment and enrollment, summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with school-wide or specific program purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **H. Recruitment, Auditions and Portfolio Reviews, Enrollment, Financial Aid, Retention, Recordkeeping, and Advisement**

#### **ACCPAS STANDARDS**

- A. Communications with prospective students and parents must be accurate and must present the school and its programs in an authentic manner.
- B. A school must make clear the extent to which enrollment in the school and its programs is open or selective.
- C. As a matter of sound educational practice, schools with selective enrollment policies recruit and admit students only to programs or curricula for which they show aptitudes and prospects for success.
- D. Admission and recruitment goals, policies, and procedures shall be ethical, controlled by the school and compatible with the purposes of the school.
- E. Admissions evaluation procedures and advising services must be clearly related to the goals and objectives of the school's arts programs.
- F. Enrollment in or admission to particular programs of study must be correlated to the institution's ability to provide the requisite instruction at the appropriate level for all students enrolled.
- G. Retention policies must be:
  - 1. appropriate to the purposes of the school's curricular programs;
  - 2. clearly defined;
  - 3. published for students and faculty; and
  - 4. applied with rigor and fairness.
- H. Policies and procedures for financial aid must be codified and applied consistently.
- I. The school shall maintain accurate, up-to-date records of each student's educational progress, which may include particular courses taken, grades, and/or credits earned, performances or exhibitions associated with program requirements, and the results of other appropriate evaluations.



## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **H. Recruitment, Auditions and Portfolio Reviews, Enrollment, Financial Aid, Retention, Recordkeeping, and Advisement**

#### **ACCPAS GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A. Normally, community schools offer financial aid or subsidized programs that serve the needs of the community.
- B. Community schools should develop recruitment and financial policies that reflect awareness of the demographic composition of the community.
- C. Community and comprehensive schools should engage students with specific career goals in a continuous advisement program related to their area of specialization.
- D. Advisement should reflect concern for the student's goals and should provide assistance with the selection of lessons and courses that serve as appropriate preparation for advanced study.
- E. Each student should have access to information concerning available career options in his or her primary arts discipline.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### I. Published Materials and Websites

This section evaluates whether the school's publications, including catalogues, handbooks, and web sites, provide clear, accurate, and complete information about operations and its success in achieving its purposes.

#### Key Considerations

1. What documents are published by the school, and what are their respective purposes?
2. Do all documents provide consistent information? For example, are there inconsistencies between paper and web publications?
3. Do your various publications have the clarity, accuracy, and availability necessary to communicate successfully with their intended readers?
4. Have publications been reviewed to ensure that they address all legal requirements and provide a legal framework that supports the institution in case of disagreements or complaints?
5. Is the school's calendar system functional, up to date, and does it aid the school with conducting its programs and other activities?
6. Does the school have a system for structuring and availability of syllabi? *Is this consistent with any systems or procedures associated with the overall governing body or parent organization?*
7. How do you define and disseminate your student achievement information? How effective are the school's systems for communicating with alumni?
8. How consistent are the content and appearance of publications with the school's purposes?
9. How are various publication decisions made? How effective is the decision-making process?

#### Summary

With regard to published materials and websites, summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with school-wide or specific program purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### I. Published Materials and Websites

#### ACCPAS STANDARDS

- A. Published materials concerning the school shall be clear, accurate, and readily available.
- B. A catalog or similar document(s) shall be published at least biennially and shall cover:
  - 1. purposes;
  - 2. size and scope;
  - 3. programs or curricula;
  - 4. faculty;
  - 5. administrators and board members;
  - 6. locale;
  - 7. facilities;
  - 8. costs and refund policies including scholarship offerings and policies;
  - 9. rules and regulations for conduct;
  - 10. any quantitative, qualitative, and time requirements for admission, retention, and completion of programs, including, if applicable, any school, district, or state requirements governing the award of diplomas or certificates;
  - 11. school calendar;
  - 12. grievance procedures
  - 13. accreditation status with ACCPAS and, if applicable, other appropriate accrediting agencies
- C. Costs; qualitative, quantitative, and time requirements; and academic calendars shall have an evident and appropriate relationship to purposes, curriculum, and subject matters taught.
- D. Program and degree titles shall be consistent with content.
- E. When a school or program offers work that is given academic credit by another institution, the source of the credit and any credential it leads to must be clear.
- F. Through means consistent with its purposes and resources the school shall routinely provide reliable data and information to the public concerning the achievement of its purposes.
- G. The school shall have readily available valid documentation for any statements and/or promises regarding such matters as program excellence, educational results, success in placement, and achievements of graduates or faculty.
- H. Published materials must clearly distinguish those programs, courses, services, and personnel available every academic year from those available on a less frequent basis.
- I. Publications shall not list as current any courses not taught for two consecutive years that will not be taught during the third consecutive year.

#### ACCPAS GUIDELINES

- A. Published materials include Internet Web sites and any other forms of information distribution.
- B. In addition to a standard catalog, schools should maintain published documents of sufficient clarity and detail to facilitate understanding about all aspects of their work among administrators, faculty, students, parents/guardians, and other constituencies.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **J. Branch Campuses and Extension and Affiliate Programs**

These questions assess the nature of the relationship between the main institution and any extension and satellite programs, and whether this relationship has been clearly defined.

You will need to decide whether to include branch campuses, extension and affiliate programs in your assessment, and how to apply each item in this Guide, or the Guide as a whole, to each branch, extension, or affiliate. Normally, a comprehensive assessment includes all offerings of the school in any location. Of course, branches, extensions, and affiliates may be the subject of a separate or specific assessment.

#### **Key Considerations**

1. How many branch campuses, extensions, or affiliate programs are there? Are any being planned?
2. For each branch, extension, or affiliate, what exists or is planned with regard to the following items, and what is or will be the relationship of each to the main school? These relationships should be clear in terms of organizational structure, operations, and educational programs.
  - a. Purposes
  - b. Size and scope
  - c. Finances
  - d. Governance and administration
  - e. Faculty and staff
  - f. Facilities and equipment, health and safety
  - g. Learning and information resources
  - h. Recruitment, auditions and portfolio reviews, enrollment, financial aid, retention, recordkeeping, and advisement
  - i. Published materials and websites
  - j. Community involvement
  - k. Relationship with parents/guardians
  - l. Evaluation, planning, and projections
  - m. Specific arts discipline programs
3. What documents, administrative practices, and communication processes are in place to ensure that the above relationships are clearly understood by the relevant constituencies of the school, its branches, and its extensions or affiliates?
4. What systems are in place to address issues of consistency when the same educational program, with the same title, is offered in different locations—whether the faculty is different, or all or partly the same? If appropriate: is the equipment for such programs consistent among locations?

5. If facilities or equipment used by a branch, extension, or affiliate are not owned by the school, what are the long-term projections for their availability?
6. If you are starting a branch, extension, or affiliate, what is the timetable for specific achievements in such areas as program planning, operational and teaching personnel, facilities development, and enrollment?

### **Summary**

With regard to branch campuses and extension and affiliate programs, summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with school-wide or specific program purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### J. Branch Campuses and Extension and Affiliate Programs

#### ACCPAS STANDARDS

- A. The school shall protect the use of its name and by doing so, protect the integrity of its accredited status.
- B. Branch campuses must have and advertise the same name as the main campus, and must be identified in the catalog or catalog supplement and in other publications of the main campus.
- C. It is not necessary for the branch to offer all of the programs that are offered at the main campus; however, the catalog of the main campus must clearly identify the programs offered only at the branch campus.
- D. Extension programs may be affiliated with either the main campus or branch campus, and, as appropriate, must be identified in the catalog of either the main or the branch campus.
- E. The school must ensure that all branch campus, extension, or similar activities:
  - 1. are considered integral parts of the institution as a whole;
  - 2. maintain the same standards as courses and programs offered on the main campus; and
  - 3. receive sufficient support for instructional and other needs.
- F. Students involved in branch or extension programs must have convenient access to all necessary learning resources.
- G. The institution must maintain direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of all programs and must ensure adequate resources.
- H. If programs or courses use special instructional delivery systems such as computers, television, videotape, or audiotape, appropriate opportunities must be provided for students to question and discuss course content with faculty.
- I. The nature and purpose of any use of the institution's name must be clearly and accurately stated and published.
- J. Schools must keep ACCPAS informed of discussions and actions leading to the establishment of branch campuses or extensions or to any expanded affiliative uses of the institution's name.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### J. Branch Campuses and Extension and Affiliate Programs

#### ACCPAS GUIDELINES AND POLICY

- A. Various terminologies are used to describe affiliated entities and activities. The terminology used here [Appendix I.C. of the *Handbook*] designates functions and organizational structures. ACCPAS policies and standards are applied according to these functions and organizational structures, irrespective of the terminology used to designate them.
- B. A branch campus is normally considered a separate institution within the same corporate structure as the main campus.
- C. A branch normally offers a complete program leading to an academic credential or provides community education services, and has a significant amount of local responsibility for administrative control and program decision making.
- D. A branch may publish its own catalog.
- E. An extension ordinarily does not offer a complete program of study leading to an academic credential. Extension programs normally share faculty with, offer the same programs as, and are under the administrative programmatic control of the main school.
- F. In extension and similar services, main campus faculty have a substantive role in the design and implementation of programs.
- G. Accreditation by ACCPAS does not automatically transfer when a branch campus becomes independent or if an extension facility becomes a branch campus

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **K. Community Involvement**

These questions explore whether the school's relationships to its community are consistent with its purposes and are made clear to all constituents.

#### **Key Considerations**

1. Community Partnerships
  - a. To what extent is the arts school working with other members of the local arts and arts education communities to promote serious study of the arts?
  - b. Are community involvement efforts integrated philosophically with the school's purposes, especially as these are expressed in educational, artistic, operational, and intellectual terms?
  - c. What school constituencies—faculty, students, administration, parents, board members, etc.—are involved in programs based on alliances, partnerships, joint educational efforts, etc.?
2. Development
  - a. What support systems are used by the school to defray costs not covered by typical funding sources (taxes, tuition, fees, other external funding)? For example, are funds raised from (a) the public and/or private sectors outside the institution, (b) from subsidies within the institution as a whole, (c) other?
  - b. What mechanisms are in place to secure this non-tuition income? (For example, patron societies, public events, operation of development program.) How effective are these systems and mechanisms?
  - c. How are these systems and mechanisms related to those for promotion and development used (a) by the arts school itself, (b) *by the overall governing body or parent institution*?
  - d. Are faculty, students, and administration involved in promotion and/or fundraising and/or development for the school? How is their involvement related to their respective teaching, learning, and management responsibilities?
  - e. Are other constituents—parents, board members, community support groups, etc., involved in promotion, fundraising, and development for the school?
  - f. Are promotion, fundraising, and development efforts integrated philosophically with the school's purposes, especially as these are expressed in educational, artistic, intellectual, and operational terms?

#### **Summary**

With regard to community involvement, summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with school-wide or specific program purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?



## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **K. Community Involvement**

#### **ACCPAS STANDARDS**

- A. Policies concerning community alliances, partnerships, and the like shall be consistent with the school's purposes, clearly stated, and approved by the governing board or authority of the institution.
- B. Schools must publish any formal relationships and policies concerning community involvement.

#### **ACCPAS GUIDELINES**

Schools vary in the intensity of their community involvement according to their various objectives and types of program offerings. Normally, all schools enjoy reciprocal benefits from cooperating with local schools, colleges, conservatories, universities, performing groups, arts, and other community-based organizations.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **L. Relationship with Parents/Guardians**

Questions here seek to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's communication with the parents or guardians of students. Communications are seen as a two-way street: the school informs parents/guardians how the students are doing and listens to comments from parents/guardians.

#### **Key Considerations**

1. What mechanisms does the school have to communicate with parents/guardians and for parents/guardians to communicate with the school?
2. Does the school work actively to communicate its overall purposes for education in the arts to parents/guardians?
3. What are the mechanisms for reporting student progress? What kinds of communications and counseling are used either to communicate exceptional work or when students appear to be in difficulty with their programs?
4. What issues come to light regarding parent/guardian involvement in your assessments of finances, governance, community involvement, and evaluation, planning and projections.

#### **Summary**

With regard to the relationship with parents/guardians, summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with school-wide or specific program purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **L. Relationship with Parents/Guardians**

#### **ACCPAS STANDARD**

Each school serving children and youth must have policies and procedures that facilitate communication between parents/guardians and the school, including regular reports of student progress.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **M. Evaluation, Planning, and Projections**

Questions in this section evaluate whether the school's procedures for evaluation, planning, and projections are consistent with its purposes and its size and scope, as well as whether these procedures focus primarily on students' educational development and show how well educational goals are being attained.

#### **Key Considerations**

1. What principles, means, and schedules are used to evaluate the school's purposes, structures of authority and responsibility, operational policies, programmatic scope, specific educational programs, and the relationships among these elements?
  - a. What concepts do you use to structure your evaluation (e.g., a mission to serve students with arts-focused interests and abilities, or everyone in the community, or a specified geographic area)?
  - b. What means of assessment are used: board studies, faculty retreats, particular methods of analyzing data and information, hiring a consultant?
  - c. How often do you conduct your evaluations?
2. Are overall assessments and targeted reviews of specific problems consistent with (a) the overall concept of evaluation present in the arts school and (b) *the overall governing body's or parent organization's concept of evaluation*?
3. What is the school's approach to evaluations of its instructional programs? How does this approach relate:
  - a. to the school's overall assessment philosophy;
  - b. to the purposes of the overall educational program as a whole;
  - c. to the purposes of each arts program?
4. What is the content of instructional evaluations? Is the nature of the evaluation appropriate for the purposes of each program? Are evaluations appropriate considering the school's admission, retention, and program requirements or expectations of achievement?
5. Are there comprehensive and/or final examinations for students in specific programs? Do these support the specific purposes of each curriculum?
6. How does the instructional evaluation system encourage and assess the development of individual knowledge and skills? Does this system support the development of artistic as well as technical capabilities?

7. Are instructional evaluations a factor in other evaluations of the overall educational program? For example, are instructional evaluations taken into consideration in:
  - a. operational policy development;
  - b. personnel decisions;
  - c. promotion of the school;
  - d. administration and governance patterns related to the overall educational program;
  - e. *the relationships between the arts school and the overall governing body or parent program?*

### **Contextual Considerations in Starting, Upgrading, Reducing or Eliminating Programs**

1. What are the real program and infrastructure costs involved in beginning, improving, downsizing, or eliminating a particular instructional program? If a new program is being started or an existing program is being upgraded, will resources be available to ensure an acceptable level of quality? If the program is being downsized or cut, what financial effects may be expected for the program or school as a whole? For example, will cutting the program result in a loss of resources or the ability to redirect resources into stronger programs?
2. If a new initiative is being planned, what degree of excellence or success can be expected given the relationships among the school's purposes, resources, and community context? How long will it take to achieve this level of excellence or success? What is the relationship of this length of time to the development or maintenance of a strong reputation for the overall educational program?
3. Will projected programs be consistent with the school's purposes, general requirements, and general policies? Will they have an effect on the resources available to existing programs? Anticipated resource utilization of projected programs is especially crucial, particularly with respect to prospects for excellence.

### **Summary**

With regard to evaluation, planning, and projections, summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with school-wide or specific program purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **M. Evaluation, Planning, and Projections**

#### **ACCPAS STANDARDS**

- A. The school shall evaluate, plan, and make projections consistent with and supportive of its purposes and its size and scope.
  - 1. Techniques, procedures, resources, time requirements, and specific methodologies used for evaluation, planning, and projections shall be developed by the school appropriate to the natures of the disciplines offered at the institution and with a logical and functioning relationship to overall financial conditions impacting the institution.
  - 2. The school shall ensure that appropriate individuals (for example, administrators, faculty, board members, parents/guardians, and students) are involved and appropriate information is available to accomplish the goals and scope of each evaluation, planning, and projections project.
  - 3. Each school must determine the scope, breadth, and degree of formal systematic attention to the connected activities of evaluation, planning, and projection as it makes decisions pertaining to:
    - a. purposes;
    - b. present and future operational conditions;
    - c. resource allocation and development; and
    - d. specific programs and services.
  - 4. Reviews and evaluations must demonstrate consideration of the purposes, structure, content, and results of each specific program of study.
  - 5. Evaluation, projection, and planning associated with adding, altering, or deleting offerings must address multiple, long-term programmatic and resource issues.
  - 6. Evaluation, planning, and projection must be pursued with sufficient intellectual rigor and resource allocations to accomplish the purposes established.
- B. The school shall demonstrate that the educational development of students is first among all evaluative considerations.
  - 1. Regular, systematic attention shall be given to internal and external indicators of student achievement.
  - 2. Indicators of student achievement shall be analyzed and organized sufficiently to produce an overall picture of the extent to which the educational and artistic purposes of the school and its arts discipline programs are being attained.
  - 3. When various levels of programs are offered in the same field of study, differences in expectations about achievement must be specified.
  - 4. The school shall be able to demonstrate that students completing programs have achieved the artistic and educational levels and competencies consistent with applicable ACCPAS standards.

## PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS

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### **M. Evaluation, Planning, and Projections**

#### **ACCPAS GUIDELINES, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND COMMENT**

- A. Evaluations provide analyses of current effectiveness; planning provides systematic approaches to the future; and projections create understanding of potential contexts and conditions.
- B. There is a broad range of evaluation techniques that produce indicators of achievement such as juries, critiques, course-specific and comprehensive examinations, institutional reviews, peer reviews, and the performance of students in various settings. Information gained should be used as an integral part of planning and projection efforts. However, the school should ensure and make clear that evaluation, planning, and projection development exists to serve the school's programs, rather than the reverse.
- C. Over-reliance on quantitative measures is inconsistent with the pursuit of quality in the arts. The higher the level of achievement, the more this is true.
- D. Evaluation, planning, and projection should contribute to general understanding about the relationships of parts to wholes, both for the school and its component programs, and, as applicable, the relationship of the school to its constituencies and communities. Evaluation, planning, and projections should result in successful management of contingencies, opportunities, and constraints. They should produce realistic short- and long-term decisions. They should ensure a productive relationship between priorities and resource allocations.

## SPECIFIC ARTS DISCIPLINE PROGRAMS

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This section presents questions that enable you to evaluate how effectively your school presents and achieves the essential components of education in each of the specific arts discipline programs that you offer, and in other disciplines. See Evaluation, Planning, and Projections on page 49 to place the following considerations in context.

### **Key Considerations for Each Program Offered**

1. What are the specific purposes—goals and objectives—of the program or course of study? How do these goals and objectives relate to the overall purposes, size, and scope of the school and to distributions of curricular time?
2. How do these purposes relate to various basic approaches to arts study: (a) creation/performance-oriented; (b) academic-oriented (theory, history, etc.); (c) appreciation-oriented; (d) experimental or non-traditional?
3. What are the specific objectives for students at various ages and at various developmental stages? For example, to what extent is the emphasis on (a) basic skills development, (b) coverage of material, (c) the experience of preparing works for public performance or exhibition, (d) studies tailored to the needs and background of the individual student as assessed at the beginning of the program and/or at other specific points during the program?
4. What policies and procedures exist regarding public performance or exhibition by (a) students, (b) faculty, (c) faculty and students in this program? How are these policies and procedures related to educational, artistic, and developmental objectives?
5. What is the specific student population in the program? How are students recruited (if applicable) and enrolled?
6. Are the individual goals and objectives of the faculty, students, and administrators who are most deeply involved in the program consistent with the program's goals and objectives?
7. What is the content of the program and its component parts? Content here means expectations for knowledge and skill acquisition in the arts and in other disciplines.
  - a. How consistent is this content with:
    - (1) the purposes of the school and the specific program or course of study being considered (item 1. above);
    - (2) approaches to arts study, particularly in terms of purposes of specific courses and requirements in the curriculum (item 2. above);
    - (3) program admission requirements and course prerequisites, particularly in terms of readiness to learn at specific levels (item 5. above);
    - (4) the specific learning objectives for students at various ages and stages of development (item 3. above);
    - (5) requirements for entry and success at the next level of education.



- b. How organized and clearly stated are content learning expectations with regard to:
  - (1) results of the overall curriculum;
  - (2) individual course or project requirements;
  - (3) the sequence or continuum from course to course and level to level;
  - (4) relationships among arts and general studies curricula;
  - (5) the specific levels of knowledge, skills, and artistry necessary to complete courses, meet requirements, and graduate from the program;
  - (6) if a high school, preparation for admission and success in collegiate level study as a major in an arts discipline or another discipline.
- 8. How does the school evaluate both student progress and program performance?
  - a. Consistent with the school's purposes and published materials, to what extent do expectations for student achievement, content requirements, course sequences, teaching approaches, requisite experiences, and evaluation nurture and ensure the following in the art form that is the basis for the program:
    - (1) conceptual, technical, interpretive, and judgment skills requisite for artistic self-expression at a level consistent with applicable goals;
    - (2) overview understanding of elements, vocabularies, organizational structures, and working patterns;
    - (3) acquaintance with histories and repertoires;
    - (4) basic competency with applicable technologies;
    - (5) development of individual capacity to apply creativity, virtuosity, imagination, integration, and synthesis of knowledge and skills to individual artistic efforts;
    - (6) readiness for public presentation and for auditions, portfolio reviews, or other evaluations associated with further education or career entry.
  - b. Consistent with the school's purposes and published materials, to what extent do expectations in non-arts disciplines meet or exceed state and college entrance requirements.
  - c. Given our results from items 8 a. and b., do we see ways we can improve how our program develops and nurtures various capabilities?
  - d. What is necessary to make improvements we believe are essential or desirable?
  - e. How can we test our assumptions, conduct experiment, or alter our planning as we develop and make the changes we think we need to make?
  - f. How will we know the extent to which our changes are making a difference?

9. Do faculty and administrators involved with the program or curriculum have a long-range development plan for it? How does this plan relate to the school's overall purposes?
10. What place does the program hold in the school's total instructional profile? What priority does the program have in planning for the future?
11. What is the relationship (if any) of the program to (a) offerings of local community arts schools, (b) offerings of other private and public schools (K-12), or (b) offerings in the community for preschool children, adults, and older adults? To what extent do the offerings complement each other?

### **Summary for Each Program Offered**

Summarize what your assessment reveals about strengths, areas that need improvement, and consistency with specific program or school-wide purposes. What do your findings reveal about questions, new aspirations, and future challenges?

*For additional questions regarding evaluation, see Section M, Evaluation, Planning, and Projections (page 49).*

## SPECIFIC ARTS DISCIPLINE PROGRAMS

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### ACCPAS CURRICULAR STANDARDS FOR ALL PROGRAMS

#### **A. Basic School Types**

ACCPAS recognizes two distinct types of schools and programs:

1. Community Arts Schools
  - a. These schools offer programs of arts study in one or more formats for children, youth, and adults, in the institution's local community. These range from early childhood programs to private instruction to large institutionalized programs with specialized professional faculty and administration. Normally, these schools do not offer elementary, middle, or high school studies that include general education.
  - b. The following arts discipline standards are applied as applicable to each discrete program offering of the school, whether lessons, classes, ensembles, or studios. Community arts schools may or may not offer curricula. A curriculum is a specified course of study, often involving more than one educational experience.
2. Precollegiate arts schools, offering general education or the high school diploma. [Not applicable to community arts schools.]

#### **B. Fundamental Purposes and Principles**

##### 1. Purposes

Each institution is responsible for developing and defining the specific purposes of its overall program in each arts discipline, and if applicable, of each program it offers in each arts discipline.

##### 2. Relationships: Purposes, Content, and Expectations – General

- a. For each program, there must be logical and functioning relationships among purposes, structure, content, and levels of study or competency or proficiency expected.
- b. For each program, the program or curricular structure and any requirements for admission, continuation, or completion must be consistent with program purposes and content.
- c. Titles of programs must be consistent with their content.

##### 3. Relationships: Purposes, Content, and Expectations – Arts Disciplines

###### a. Specific Disciplines

###### (1) Dance

Purposes must indicate the degree of involvement with any of the following content areas that are offered: performance, choreography, design/technology, analysis, dance history, and other subjects or fields central to the school's mission. Choices among the areas and emphases within each area are the prerogatives of each institution.

(2) Music

Purposes must indicate the degree of involvement with any of the following content areas that are offered: performance, aural skills and analysis, composition and improvisation, repertory and history, technology, and other subjects or fields central to the school's mission. Choices among the areas and emphases within each area are the prerogatives of each institution.

(3) Theatre

Purposes must indicate the degree of involvement with any of the following content areas that are offered: performance, design/technology, playwriting, analysis, theatre history, and other subjects or fields central to the school's mission. These may include film/video if offered by the institution. Choices among the areas and emphases within each area are the prerogatives of each institution.

(4) Visual Arts

Purposes must indicate the degree of involvement with any of the following content areas that are offered: studio, analysis, art/design history, technology, and other subjects or fields central to the school's mission. These may include film/video if offered by the institution. Choices among the areas and emphases within each area are the prerogatives of each institution.

(5) Other Arts

Purposes must indicate the degree of involvement with any of the following content areas that are offered: creation and/or performance, analysis, history of the art form, technology, and other subjects or fields central to the school's mission. Choices among the areas and emphases within each area are the prerogatives of each institution.

b. All Arts Discipline Programs

- (1) Choices must be consistent with overall purposes and with the requirements of specific program offerings.
- (2) Work in any of these content areas offered by an institution is pursued and evaluated as appropriate to students' ages and degrees of involvement.

**C. Programs Involving Distance Learning, Disciplines in Combination, or with a Focus on Electronic Media**

Programs in these categories must meet applicable requirements in Appendices I.D., E., and F [of the *Handbook*].

**D. Resources**

Resources must be sufficient to support the purposes, goals, objectives, and content of each program offered and must meet ACCPAS operational requirements in this regard (see "Purposes and Operations," sections A–M above [section II of the *Handbook*]).

**E. Specific Community or Precollegiate Programs**

The standards applicable to each non-degree-granting program are comprised of those referenced in item B. (and C., if applicable) above, as well as those outlined for specific programs that follow in item E. (and F. or G., if applicable) below [items III.B., C., E., F., and G. of the *Handbook*].

A review of each institutional offering in the arts must demonstrate that:

1. Program purposes are specific and clear with regard to the levels of what students are expected to study, know, and be able to do in terms of content or subject matter and technique;
2. Any prerequisites or equipment and technology requirements are clearly stated;
3. Students are constantly achieving a measurable degree of advancement toward the fulfillment of program purposes;
4. Students are appropriately engaged and/or are developing an effective work process; and
5. Students are acquiring a body of knowledge and skills sufficient to be evaluated and a level of competence acceptable for presentation within and/or beyond the school.

To attain these objectives, it is assumed that work at the introductory/foundation level will be followed by increasingly advanced work.

## **F. Pre-Professional Certificate Programs**

### **1. General Standards and Guidelines**

- a. The pre-professional certificate program is a formal course of studies in an arts discipline offered by the school to provide training on the secondary level that develops disciplinary competence at least equivalent to the entrance requirements of NASAD (art and design), NASD (dance), NASM (music), and NAST (theatre) member institutions offering professional baccalaureate degrees.
- b. Though policies and procedures concerning admission to the pre-professional certificate program will vary among institutions, essential components include:
  - (1) a determination of student potential for advanced study; and
  - (2) a thorough explanation of the requirements of the certificate program.
- c. Through an appropriate and structured advising process, the matters listed above and information concerning future study and professional opportunities should be discussed with students and parents throughout the duration of the program.

### **2. Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities – Dance**

- a. Performance
  - (1) Achievement of the highest possible level of accomplishment in the field or fields chosen. It is assumed that study will continue throughout the entire certificate program.
  - (2) Opportunities for presentation and critique in a variety of formal and informal settings.
  - (3) Opportunities for study and/or experiences in more than one area. In most cases study of more than one dance style or genre is appropriate and should be encouraged.
- b. Analysis and Dance History

- (1) Students should develop fundamental understanding of the elements of dance and abilities to respond to, interpret, create, analyze, and evaluate their own performances or works and those of others.
- (2) Students should develop a basic knowledge of some of the major achievements in dance history.

c. Final Project

A final project before certification is essential. Although most students will choose to perform in fulfillment of this requirement, students who show exceptional promise and inclination towards dance history, choreography, or analysis may undertake other appropriate projects.

### **3. Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities – Music**

a. Performance

- (1) Achievement of the highest possible level of performance. It is assumed that study in the major performing medium will continue throughout the entire certificate program.
- (2) Solo and ensemble experience in a variety of formal and informal settings.
- (3) Opportunities for study in secondary performance areas. In most cases, keyboard study is appropriate and should be encouraged.

b. Basic Musicianship

- (1) Students develop fundamental musicianship, including basic understanding of musical properties such as rhythm, melody, harmony, timbre, texture, and form; abilities to respond to, interpret, create, analyze, and evaluate music; and sight-reading and aural skills.
- (2) Students develop a general knowledge of music history through performance, listening, and discussion to enable them to place compositions in historic and stylistic perspective.
- (3) Evidence of achievement in basic musicianship must be determined through formal examination procedures.

c. Final Project

A final project before certification is essential. Although most students will choose to perform a public recital in fulfillment of this requirement, students who show exceptional promise and inclination toward composition or music history may undertake other appropriate projects in lieu of the recital.

### **4. Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities – Theatre**

a. Performance and/or Design/Technology or Playwriting

- (1) Achievement of the highest possible level of accomplishment in the field or fields chosen. It is assumed that study will continue throughout the entire certificate program.
- (2) Opportunities for presentation and critique in a variety of formal and informal settings.

- (3) Opportunities for study and/or experiences in more than one area are appropriate and should be encouraged.

b. Analysis and Theatre History

- (1) Students should develop fundamental understanding of the elements of theatre and abilities to respond to, interpret, create, analyze, and evaluate their own works and the works of others.
- (2) Students should develop a basic knowledge of some of the major achievements in theatre history.

c. Final Project

A final project before certification is essential. Although most students will choose to present acting or design technology or playwriting work in fulfillment of this requirement, students who show exceptional promise and inclination towards theatre history or analysis may undertake other appropriate projects.

## **5. Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities – Visual Arts**

a. Studio

- (1) Achievement of the highest possible level of studio accomplishment in such areas as one or more of the arts, design, media, film/video, etc. It is assumed that studio study will continue throughout the entire certificate program.
- (2) Opportunities for presentation and critique in a variety of formal and informal settings.
- (3) Opportunities for study and/or experiences in more than one area.

b. Analysis and Art/Design History

- (1) Students develop fundamental understanding of the elements of art/design and abilities to respond to, interpret, create, analyze, and evaluate their own works and the works of others in one or more specializations.
- (2) Students develop a basic knowledge of some of the major achievements in visual arts and/or design and/or film history.

c. Final Project

A final project before certification is essential. Although most students will choose to present studio work in fulfillment of this requirement, students who show exceptional promise and inclination toward art/design history or analysis may undertake other appropriate projects in lieu of an exhibition.

## **6. Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities – Creative Writing and Other Arts**

a. Creation and/or Performance

- (1) Achievement of the highest possible level of accomplishment in the art form. It is assumed that study will continue throughout the entire certificate program.
- (2) Opportunities for presentation and critique in a variety of formal and informal settings.
- (3) Opportunities for study and/or experiences in more than one area.

b. Analysis and History

- (1) Students should develop fundamental understanding of the elements of the art form and abilities to respond to, interpret, create, analyze, and evaluate their own performances or works and those of others.
- (2) Students should develop a basic knowledge of some of the major achievements in the history of the art form.

c. Final Project

A final project before certification is essential. Although most students will choose to present creative work and/or a performance in fulfillment of this requirement, students who show exceptional promise and inclination towards history or analysis in the art form may undertake other appropriate projects.

**7. Other Elementary/Secondary Certificate Programs**

1. The awarding of a certificate implies the successful attainment of certain competencies at the elementary and/or secondary level either through course work or individual study.
2. Certificate programs usually provide a curriculum of performance or studio studies combined with other studies in the art form. Certificates indicating a level of achievement, such as Junior, Intermediate, Senior, and College Preparatory Certificates, are examples of this type. In certain instances, however, a course of study that has a specific emphasis may be appropriate. Examples are Certificates in Basic Musicianship, Art History, Technical Theatre, or Dance Performance.
3. It is essential that the school provides a clear statement of the entrance requirements, purposes, level of the program, and completion requirements for all types of certificate programs offered. This information shall be available to students and parents, and opportunities for counseling and discussion in this regard shall be provided.



## CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

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The assessment of arts schools takes place in a variety of contexts. As indicated in the Introduction, these include:

1. examining the viability of current activities and future plans;
2. planning to improve current operations;
3. assessing the need for new programs or directions;
4. planning new initiatives;
5. *maintaining and developing positive connections with your school's overall governing body or parent organization*
6. determining readiness and preparing for ACCPAS accreditation.

Once you have answered the foregoing sets of assessment questions, you may find a large-scale summary useful to establish priorities and support decisions reached. Consider the following:

1. What level of achievement is evident in the arts school as a whole and/or each existing program considered in your assessment? What are students learning overall?
2. Given the purposes of your school, are your programs designed and do they operate in a manner that fulfills these purposes? To what extent do concepts, policies, and operations of the various parts contribute to (a) the functioning of the entire school, (b) *the functioning of the entire overall governing body or parent organization?*
3. What are the critical issues that will influence the future viability and effectiveness of the arts education school and/or specific programs it offers or plans to offer?
4. To what extent does the assessment reveal that the arts school is in a good position to deal with these critical issues?
5. What are the most important next tasks for the school and its programs? What are the priorities among these tasks?

## EVALUATION METHODS AND TEMPLATES

There are virtually countless ways this evaluation document may be used in an institutional setting to advance and improve the school and its educational programs. The most typical method consists of creating narratives, either individually or in committees or groups, to answer all questions in each section, and utilizing this as a resource for planning and action. This is typical of how documentation is created and submitted during the ACCPAS accreditation process.

Another useful exercise may be to use the questions located throughout the document to create a rubric or survey that may be distributed to faculty, students, or other stakeholders. One example follows:

<b>A. PURPOSES</b> (based on pages 11 – 14)	Not Evident	Developing	Established	Highly Functional
Presence and awareness of published purposes.				
Published purposes effectively express the school's educational goals.				
Published purposes are truly guiding the school.				
School promotes common understanding of purposes among all constituents.				
Evaluations of effectiveness in communicating the school's purposes.				
Effectiveness in carrying out published purposes under current conditions.				
Reviews of the school's purposes—development over time.				
Relationship of published purposes to overall governing body or parent organization.				

### DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS:

1. *Not Evident*                      Little or no presence in the work of the arts school
2. *Developing*                        Early stages of implementation or use in the work of the arts school
3. *Established*                        Regularly utilized in the work of the arts school
4. *Highly Functional*                Fully integrated and highly utilized in the regular work of the arts school

In this way, sections of the *Guide* can be distributed, and data can be collected and easily assembled. While surveyed results should not be used as an end in and of itself, or in place of a qualitative evaluation, their results can tell you a lot about the perceptions and realities of various constituencies involved.

Similar evaluation methods may be created using the ACCPAS Standards located throughout the document, or by using lists created specifically for your institution. The *Guide* becomes most useful when it is catered to the specific needs of individual schools.

# APPENDIX

## About CAAA and ACCPAS

The Council of Arts Accrediting Associations (CAAA) is a nonprofit corporation based in Reston, Virginia. Council members are the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, the National Association of Schools of Dance, the National Association of Schools of Music, and the National Association of Schools of Theatre. The Presidents, Vice Presidents, and common Executive Director of these organizations constitute the Board of Trustees. These organizations collectively accredit over 1,100 institutions and programs in the arts, primarily in higher education

The Council has for decades been engaged in accrediting precollegiate and community arts programs. In 2001 it formalized this function by establishing ACCPAS. ACCPAS is not a membership association; its principal function is to assess and accredit.

ACCPAS requires precollegiate arts schools to pass two stages of review before becoming accredited:

1. **Self-Study:** Applying schools must complete the *ACCPAS Self-Study Document*, which asks analytical questions that may not appear verbatim in the *Guide*. The *Self-Study Document* also requests that certain documents (e.g., school admissions policies) be attached to the self-study and that others be provided to visiting evaluators from ACCPAS. Such documentation requirements are the primary difference between the *Self-Study Document* and the *Guide*.
2. **School Visit:** Upon completion of the *Self-Study Document*, ACCPAS schedules a school visit by a team of reviewers. These reviewers employ a more detailed set of criteria for their analysis: the same Standards, Guidelines, and Recommendations included in this *Guide*. The team produces a Visitors' Report, and ACCPAS invites the school to respond formally.

The ACCPAS Commission takes action based on the Self-Study, the Visitors' Report, and comments from the school about the Visitors' Report.

ACCPAS reviews may be coordinated with other mandated reviews including regional or parent school accreditation.

To maintain accreditation once achieved, ACCPAS requires the school to abide by ACCPAS Rules of Practice and Procedure and a Code of Ethics. A great deal more information about ACCPAS is available online at [www.arts-accredit.org](http://www.arts-accredit.org).

ACCPAS Accreditation is a seal of approval, a sign that a precollegiate school offers a quality program with a major focus on arts teaching and learning. But, more fundamentally, accreditation is a planning process involving reflection and assessment, a method for thinking about a school's mission: what the school is attempting to accomplish and how well it is succeeding. Thus, ACCPAS accreditation can be extremely helpful as an organization plans how it needs to develop. While not all Arts Schools Network members will seek ACCPAS accreditation, they can still benefit from undertaking whatever aspects of assessment and reflection are useful for them at a given moment.

## Other ACCPAS Support Services for Self-Assessment

### **Consultative Services**

ACCPAS offers three primary types of consultative services: staff consultations, on-site consultations, and Commission consultations.

The ACCPAS staff may be contacted at the National Office for information and assistance. The staff can provide suggestions and share appropriate information from ACCPAS records; however, the staff does not make evaluative judgments about educational programs. There is no charge for staff consultations.

ACCPAS will arrange for suitable on-site consultants to address needs identified by inquiring institutions. These consultants are nominated from among the most experienced individuals serving as visiting evaluators in the ACCPAS accreditation process. Arrangements for on-site consultants are made by contacting the ACCPAS Executive Director. Institutions are responsible for the expenses of the consultant and a small fee calculated on a per-day basis.

ACCPAS-accredited institutions may also submit formal requests for consultation about new non-degree-granting curricula to the ACCPAS Commission. Designated personnel working with the Commission will review the proposed program and respond in writing without making an accreditation decision. Information about the process may be obtained from the ACCPAS National Office. There is no charge for Commission consultation, and this procedure is especially encouraged in the early stages of curricular planning.

### **Further Information**

For more information on ACCPAS services and publications, please contact the National Office at the following address:

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND PRECOLLEGIATE ARTS SCHOOLS  
11250 Roger Bacon Drive, Suite 21  
Reston, Virginia 20190  
[www.arts-accredit.org](http://www.arts-accredit.org)

Telephone: 703.437.0700  
Fax: 703.437.6312  
[info@arts-accredit.org](mailto:info@arts-accredit.org)

A listing of the ACCPAS Commission and Consultants may be accessed [here](#).

## About the Arts Schools Network

Arts Schools Network was founded in 1981 by several schools leaders as a forum for the exchange of ideas, issues, knowledge, experience, and solutions for education, advocacy, fundraising, and communications. The twelve arts schools administrators that met in Los Angeles in 1981 probably never suspected an organization like the Arts Schools Network would develop from their interests in learning more about each other's programs. From those simple beginnings, the Arts Schools Network has developed into a non-profit professional association that serves more than 200 members and 1500 affiliates. Because of the vision of its founders, Arts Schools Network plays a significant role in the success of arts schools everywhere.

Arts Schools Network impacts more than 60,000 students, 1,486 arts focused schools and arts organizations, 74,300 arts school administrators, teachers, and counselors, and 743,000 alumni of member schools—a number that grows by more than 48,000 each year. Its Board of Directors includes nearly 30 representatives from some of the nation's most renowned arts schools and organizations.

Membership benefits available to those who belong to the Arts Schools Network include a bi-weekly e-news, member logo/link, spotlight on schools, website link, career center, professional development, consultant directory, awards & recognition program, and membership directory.

### Further Information

For more information about the Arts Schools Network, please contact:



P.O. Box 62755  
North Charleston, SC 29419  
[www.artsschoolsnetwork.org](http://www.artsschoolsnetwork.org)

Telephone: 773.315.1118  
[info@artsschoolsnetwork.org](mailto:info@artsschoolsnetwork.org)

The ASN Board of Directors list can be found [here](#).