

**FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE  
ACCREDITATION PROGRAM**

**VISITATION MANUAL**

**for**

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS**

**(2<sup>nd</sup> Edition - June 2006)**

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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### FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

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All superintendents, principals, and pastors who read and responded to all the proposed revisions.

# FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING VISITATION

## Role of Superintendents

The superintendent in each diocese plays a vital role in the entire process of accreditation. The role of a superintendent includes:

7. reviewing and preparing a report for FCC Accreditation Committee on the personnel files of schools in preparation for their accreditation preliminary visit.
8. notifying FCC Accreditation Committee of schools' successful completion of their School Improvement Reports and their readiness for an on-site visitation.
10. acting as liaison between the visiting team and (arch)diocese.

(FCC Policies and Procedures E)

## Visiting Team

The school, through the diocesan superintendent, submits the names of three possible chairpersons and three possible dates for visitation to the FCC Accreditation Committee. The Committee appoints a chairperson, when possible, from the school's list of three possible candidates, and also appoints two to three team members for the Team. The chairperson of the Visiting Team is notified of his/her appointment and the requested dates of the on-site visit. The chairperson makes contact with the school principal and determines the actual dates for the Preliminary Visit and the Team Visit. This information is then communicated to the FCC Accreditation Committee.

- a. **Chairperson:** The chairperson of a Visiting Team must be a school administrator, have served as a Visiting Team member on three previous on-site visitations, and have completed the required FCC Training for Chairpersons. The chairperson, as an official representative of the FCC Accreditation Program, is responsible for contact and implementation with the school principal and team members regarding all aspects of the on-site visitation and is responsible for the final report of the Visiting Team.
- b. **Team Member:** A member of a Visiting Team may be a school administrator or faculty member who has completed the required FCC Training for Team Members. The team member, as a representative of the FCC Accreditation Program, is responsible to work professionally and collaboratively with the appointed chairperson of the Visiting Team.

(FCC Policies and Procedures G-2)

### **Preliminary Visit**

The chairperson of the Visiting Team makes a Preliminary Visit to the school approximately one month before the scheduled on-site visitation to determine the readiness of the school to engage in an on-site visitation. At this time the chairperson meets with the principal, pastor, and faculty; checks personnel and other pertinent school records; reviews the School Improvement Report, tours the facility; and confirms all arrangements for the on-site visitation.

(FCC Policies and Procedures G-3)

### **Visitation**

The Visiting Team, appended by the FCC Accreditation Committee, makes an official on-site visit to the school to assess the educational program of the school, to validate and appraise the quality and comprehensiveness of the school's School Improvement Report, to assess the school's compliance with the accreditation standards, and to make recommendations for the school's improvement and its initial or continued accreditation.

(FCC Policies and Procedures G-4)

**FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE  
ACCREDITATION PROGRAM  
VISITATION MANUAL  
for  
School Improvement Process**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

**A. School Improvement Process**

The School Improvement Process is a process of evaluation and planning created by the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE). It focuses on the improvement of student learning and school performance. This process enables a school to measure existing quality, demonstrate compliance with accreditation standards, and identify the means and methods of attaining even higher levels of student achievement and school performance. Most importantly, this process helps to ensure the Catholic dimension of the school, both in terms of Gospel values and in academic excellence. The process involves three phases: Planning, Peer Review Visit, and Implementation.

**B. Purpose of Visitation**

Visitation is the second phase of the cycle of the School Improvement Process. Its purpose is to assist the FCC Accreditation Committee in the process of accrediting or continuing the accreditation of a school by assessing the quality of the school's educational program and its compliance with the accreditation standards.

**C. Objectives of Visitation**

The objectives of the on-site accreditation visit are:

1. to assure the FCC Accreditation Committee of the validity of a school's School Improvement Report and its Action Plan,
2. to identify and commend the strengths of a school,
3. to develop recommendations to strengthen a school's efforts for the improvement of the quality of its program,
4. to bring objective expertise to assist in a school's current evaluation and its future planning,
5. to assess a school's compliance with accreditation standards,
6. to develop a Written Report of the Visitation Team's findings, and
7. to make a recommendation concerning a school's accreditation status.

## THE VISITING TEAM

### A. General Guidelines

1. The team shall consist of a chairperson and two or three members. For schools with fewer than 500 students, a team composed of a chairperson and two team members is sufficient. Those schools having more than 500 students shall have a team composed of a chairperson and a minimum of three team members. Additional personnel may be added by the FCC Accreditation Program Administrator, after consultation with the superintendent, chairperson, principal, and pastor.
2. Team personnel shall not be from the same diocese in which the school to be visited is located, nor from the same religious congregation that staffs the school.
3. The selection of the chairperson is the co-responsibility of the FCC Accreditation Committee and the school to be visited. The FCC Accreditation Program Administrator shall send to the principal of the school to be visited a roster of qualified chairpersons. The principal proposes three possible chairpersons, in the order of preference, for final assignment by the FCC Accreditation Committee.
4. The final selection of the team members is the responsibility of the FCC Accreditation Program Administrator.
5. Team members will be selected to give balance and competence to the evaluation. Their expertise shall encompass the areas of administration, finance, program, facilities, community relations, and various areas of the curriculum.
6. Team members are to act and dress professionally as representatives of the FCC Accreditation Program. They are to work collaboratively, seek consensus in their decision-making, and maintain confidentiality at all times.
7. Team members are to participate in all scheduled meetings, engage in assigned interviews of school personnel, observe in classrooms, and prepare all assigned work as requested by the chairperson.
8. No person shall serve as a chairperson or team member without receiving training in the FCC Accreditation Standards and the School Improvement Process.
9. The principal of the school to be visited will be notified by the FCC Accreditation Program Administrator, two months prior to the visit, of the names of the visiting team personnel.
10. Any changes in personnel or dates of visitation must be made through the FCC Accreditation Program Administrator and the (Arch)diocesan Office of Education.

## **B. Expenses of the Visiting Team**

1. All Visiting Team expenses incurred during the visit (lodging, meals, travel) are the responsibility of the host school. Travel by car shall be reimbursed to the driver only. The principal of the school being visited reimburses drivers at the prevailing rate of the local diocese.
2. A list of expenses shall be submitted to the principal of the host school at the end of the visit. These expenses are to be paid before the Visiting Team leaves.
3. The Visiting Team Chairperson is to be paid an honorarium of \$300.00 which covers both the preliminary visit and the on-site official visit.
4. Each Visiting Team member is to receive a \$150.00 honorarium for the official on-site visit.

## **C. Chairperson**

1. The Visiting Team Chairperson shall have served on three visiting teams and have experience as a principal, assistant principal, or (Arch)diocesan administrator.
2. The Visiting Team Chairperson must have had training in the FCC Accreditation Standards and the School Improvement Process.
3. The Visiting Team Chairperson shall have the necessary leadership skills to direct the work of the Visiting Team and prepare an objective and accurate written report of the Team's findings and the quality of the visited school's School Improvement Report and Action Plan.

## **D. Role of Chairperson**

### **1. Representative of the FCC Accreditation Committee**

The Visiting Team Chairperson:

- a. acts as the official representative of the FCC Accreditation Committee;
- b. verifies the readiness of the school to undergo the on-site visitation;
- c. determines the objectivity and accuracy of the school's School Improvement Report, its indication of the strengths and areas for improvement of the school, and the validity of its Action Plan;
- d. assures that the Visiting Team makes valid, feasible recommendations in its Written Report;
- e. contacts the FCC Accreditation Program Administrator to facilitate, with the FCC Accreditation Committee, the interpretation and clarification of accreditation standards and/or to request additional information needed to conduct the visit;
- f. conducts the on-site visitation of the school and submits a report of the Team's findings to the FCC Accreditation Committee for its determination of the school's accreditation status; and
- g. is responsible for the Written Report, Standards Checklist, and the Statement of Recommendation being sent to the members of the FCC Accreditation Committee.

2. **Contact Person with (Arch)diocesan Office of Education**

The Visiting Team Chairperson:

- a. maintains official contact with the (arch)diocesan Office of Education and verifies the readiness of the school for the on-site visitation,
- b. confers with the (Arch)diocesan Office of Education concerning non-compliance of accreditation standards or questionable practices at the school, and
- c. seeks assistance from the (Arch)diocesan Office of Education when difficulties are encountered in carrying out the visitation or in making formal recommendations for the Written Report.

3. **Team Leader**

The Visiting Team Chairperson:

- a. is the official spokesperson for the Visiting Team,
- b. coordinates the activities of the Visiting Team and the writing of the Written Report,
- c. acts as the liaison between the Visiting Team and school personnel, and establishes ongoing communication and correspondence with all members of the Visiting Team.

4. **Professional Evaluator**

The Visiting Team Chairperson:

- a. maintains a responsibility for the entire process of visitation and assessment,
- b. maintains objectivity and open-mindedness to the philosophy, policies, and practices of the school ,
- c. has a commitment to careful analysis and conducts a fact-finding, on-site visitation with regard to the observance of the FCC Accreditation Standards and the planning of the school's School Improvement Report, and
- d. brings objective expertise to the school to assist in the current assessment and future planning for the school.

5. **Public Relations Person**

The Visiting Team Chairperson:

- e. sets the tone; establishes the climate for the visit,
- b. affirms the work of the school, its personnel, and its School Improvement Report, and
- c. assists the principal in preparing for the on-site visit.

6. **Catalyst**

The Visiting Team Chairperson:

- a. gives assistance in changing those aspects of the school operation which are not meeting FCC Accreditation Standards, and
- b. guides the principal and school community with creative vision and insight in achieving a new direction for the future.

## PREPARATION FOR VISITATION

### A. School

1. The school completes its School Improvement Process and submits its Report and Action Plan to the (arch)diocesan superintendent for review. The superintendent, in turn, submits written notification to the FCC Accreditation Committee of the school's successful completion of the School Improvement Report and the school's readiness for an on-site visitation. This notification is sent prior to the scheduling of the visit by the FCC Accreditation Committee. **(See Appendix for *Visitation Readiness report on p. 17.*)**
2. The school prepares a budget to cover the expenses of the on-site visit. This should include:
  - a. printed copies of the School Improvement Report,
  - b. mailing costs,
  - c. costs for the Preliminary Visit by the Visiting Team Chairperson, and
  - d. housing, food, travel, and honorarium costs for the Visiting Team.
3. After approval of its School Improvement Report by the superintendent, the school prepares the School Improvement Report for publication and sends a copy of the Report to all the members of the Visiting Team. A copy should be sent to the superintendent and chairperson at least one month before the scheduled Preliminary Visit. Team members should receive their copies at least one month before the on-site visit.
4. The school makes plans for housing the Visiting Team.
5. The school makes preparations for facilitating the Visiting Team's work: work room, computers and printers, meeting sites, folders with necessary information for the Team, etc. **(See Appendix for *Principal's Checklist for Visitation on p. 28.*)**
6. The school prepares documentation materials for the Report as will be needed by the Team.  
**(See Appendix for *Principal's Checklist for Visitation on p. 28.*)**

### B. Chairperson

1. The Visiting Team Chairperson writes a letter of acceptance as chairperson to both the FCC Accreditation Program Administrator and the school's principal. This letter should confirm the dates of the decided Preliminary Visit and the on-site visitation.
2. The Visiting Team Chairperson prepares a schedule for the Preliminary Visit.
3. The Visiting Team Chairperson carefully reads and reviews the School Improvement Report by:

- a. reading the Report once to gain initial perspective and reading it a second time for notations, questions, etc.,
- b. checking for completeness and clarity and informing school principal if material is missing or unclear,
- c. reviewing identified strengths,
- d. carefully reviewing documentation concerning needed improvements in student learning and school performance and the school's Action Plan,
- e. preparing a list of questions and items to be reviewed with principal at time of Preliminary Visit, and
- f. recognizing the Report as the result of great effort on the part of the total school community and treating it accordingly.

## PRELIMINARY VISITATION

### A. School

1. The school administrator arranges for a visit from the local superintendent to review the school personnel files for instructional and non-instructional personnel and receives a copy of the superintendent's report to the FCC Accreditation Committee of this review. **(See Appendix for *Review of Personnel Files* report, p. 19.)**
2. The school administrator arranges with the Visiting Team Chairperson for the date of the Preliminary Visitation which is to take place at least one month before the on-site visitation.
3. The school is responsible to offer overnight housing for the Visiting Team Chairperson if distance and time require it. It is also responsible for travel and food expenses.
4. The school has available the superintendent's ***Review of Personnel Files* report** and the checklist used by the diocesan official when checking the school's personnel files. (This checklist may be a diocesan form or the FCC Checklist on page 27 of the ***FCC Visitation Manual***.)
5. The school has available for the Visiting Team Chairperson a schedule of the school day, including beginning and ending times, lunch periods, etc.
6. The school arranges for a visit of the school pastor with the Visiting Team Chairperson.
7. The school arranges for a visit of the faculty with the Visiting Team Chairperson.

### B. Chairperson

1. The Visiting Team Chairperson makes arrangements with the school principal for the schedule of the day, the materials to be examined, and meetings with personnel.
2. The Visiting Team Chairperson meets with the principal and Steering Committee Chairperson to:
  - a. explain the purpose and procedures of the Preliminary Visit and the on-site visit,
  - b. review the School Improvement Report,
  - c. review the current ARCA and the ARCA's for the preceding two years,
  - d. discuss the arrangements for the on-site visitation and the Visitation Schedule and ensure that there will be adequate working space, materials,

equipment, and supplies for the Visiting Team.

3. The Visiting Team Chairperson reviews the School Improvement Report with the principal and Steering Committee Chairperson to:
  - a. review all aspects of the Report carefully and thoroughly,
  - b. ask questions, check on missing or unclear items, etc.,
  - c. indicate items requiring an update and request items needed to supplement the Report, and
  - d. discuss the main elements of the focus of the on-site visitation:
    - (1) the collaborative involvement of the school community in the School Improvement Process,
    - (2) the reflection on the School Profile and the school's Mission and Belief Statements,
    - (3) the delineation of the strengths and weakness of each area of the School Improvement Report and the formulation of corresponding commendations and recommendations,
    - (4) the connection of Area 3 and Area 4 in the School Improvement Report and the linkage of these areas with the Action Plan and the School-wide Goals for Learning,
    - (5) the review of the school's compliance with the accreditation standards, and
    - (6) the formulation of recommendations concerning the school's compliance with the accreditation standards.
  
4. The Visiting Team Chairperson reviews the following school records with the school's principal:
  - a. superintendent's **Review of Personnel Files** report,
  - b. Diocesan Personnel Checklist or other such form,
  - c. Area D: Personnel Standards, pp. 6-10 of **FCC Principles and Standards (June 2006)**.
  
5. The Visiting Team Chairperson meets with the pastor to:
  - a. explain the purpose and procedures of the Preliminary Visit and on-site visit,
  - b. express appreciation for the pastor's support for Catholic education,
  - c. stress that the assessment and visitation will also focus on the Catholic identity of the school,

- d. review with him the School Improvement Process and the implementation of the Action Plan,
  - e. emphasize the role of the Steering Committee in the process of the School Improvement Report and the monitoring of the Action Plan,
  - f. discuss the position of the school as an integral part of the parish, and
  - g. encourage continued pastoral and parish support of the school.
6. The Visiting Team Chairperson tours the school campus and its facilities.
  7. At the end of the visit, the Visiting Team Chairperson holds a meeting with the faculty to affirm their work on the School Improvement Report and to explain the purpose and procedures of the Preliminary Visit and the on-site visit. The Visiting Team Chairperson reassures the faculty of the positive factors of the visitation and seeks to dispel any sense of “threat.” The Visiting Team Chairperson explains that the Team’s purpose is to validate the quality of the school program and the Action Plan it has developed as a result of the School Improvement Process. The Visiting Team Chairperson also re-emphasizes that the value of the Process is the on-going growth and improvement of the school.
  8. Before leaving the school, the chairperson makes contact with the (Arch)diocesan Office of Education to review the findings of the Preliminary Visit and to verify the readiness of the school for the on-site visit.

### C. Post Preliminary Visit

The Visiting Team Chairperson prepares the following materials after the Preliminary Visit.

1. Welcome Letter to each Team Member which should include:
  - a. chairperson’s name, address, phone number,
  - b. principal’s name, address, phone number,
  - c. dates of Visitation,
  - d. Visitation Schedule (subject to revision at Orientation Meeting),
  - e. reminder to read the School Improvement Report carefully and thoroughly **before** the Visitation, and
  - f. notification of travel arrangements to principal and chairperson.
2. Follow-up Letter to Principal which should include:
  - a. items in the School Improvement Report to be corrected or up-dated (if necessary),
  - b. reminder to send School Improvement Report to Team Members,
  - c. reminder to send information on housing (address and phone number) to Team Members,
  - d. reminder to use **Principal’s Check List for Visitation**, and
  - e. verification of final arrangements.
3. List of Responsibilities and Assignments for each Visiting Team Member.

4. Preparation of Materials for Team Report:
  - a. rough draft/outline for Introductory Items of Written Team Report,
  - b. copies of other Team Reports,
  - c. copy of FCC Accreditation Standards,
  - d. copy of School Improvement Process Manual,
  - e. copy of FCC Visitation Manual, and
  - f. copy of Standards Checklist.

## VISITATION

### A. Orientation of Team Members

1. Time of Meeting: An orientation meeting with the Visiting Team Members is to be held at the start of the on-site visitation. The Visiting Team Chairperson holds this meeting on the afternoon of the first day of the Visitation to introduce Team Members and acclimate them to the visitation process and their role and responsibilities.
2. Role of Team Members: The role of the Visiting Team Members is to act as representatives of the FCC Accreditation Committee in validating and assessing the a school's process for initial or renewal of accreditation. Specifically, the Visiting Team Members are to:
  - a. act with objectivity and confidentiality at all times,
  - b. act with professionalism as trained educators and representatives of the FCC Accreditation Committee,
  - c. work in a collegial and collaborative fashion with the Visiting Team Chairperson and the other members of the Visiting Team,
  - d. attend all required meetings and perform the tasks assigned to them by the Visiting Team Chairperson,
  - e. validate and affirm the work of the School Improvement Report,
  - f. confirm the collaborative involvement of the Steering Committee and the school community,
  - g. assess the completeness of the School Profile and the appropriateness of the school's Mission and Belief Statements,
  - h. identify the strengths of the Report and make recommendations concerning those areas which need strengthening,
  - i. review the school's compliance with accreditation standards and prepare recommendations required for the school's improved compliance with these standards, and
  - j. develop a Written Report of the Visiting Team's findings, giving attention to the following:
    - (1) all conclusions are to be based on firm foundation of fact and be derived at in a consensual manner,
    - (2) recommendations are to be realistic , and
    - (3) the school's School Improvement Report and Action Plan are to be examined in light of its Profile and Mission and Belief Statements

**Note: Do not compare situations with “my” school.  
Do not impose likes and dislikes.  
Do not recommend specific materials or programs.**

3. Review of Preliminary Visit: The Visiting Team Chairperson reviews the results of the Preliminary Visit, with special respect to the following:
  - a. an overview of the school, its programs, and school profile,
  - b. any problem areas observed during Preliminary Visit or in the School Improvement Report,
  - c. principal's areas of concern,
  - d. a review of the School Improvement Report, focusing on its thoroughness and clarity, and emphasizing the Action Plan,
  - e. identification of special area school personnel and their days and hours of employment, and
  - f. an explanation of the layout of the school campus and facilities.
4. Review Visitation Schedule : The Visiting Team Chairperson reviews the Visitation schedule and individual team assignments and responsibilities
5. Interview and Meeting Schedule: The Visiting Team Chairperson reviews the schedule for interviews and meetings to be held during the visit.
6. Standards Checklist: The Visiting Team Chairperson reviews the process for reviewing the school's compliance with accreditation standards and the preparation of the Standards Checklist.
7. Development of Written Report and Oral Exit Report: The Visiting Team Chairperson reviews and explains how the Written Report will be developed and also what will be the essentials of the Oral Exit Report.

## **B. Visiting Team Responsibilities**

1. Each Team Member is to thoroughly read and review the School Improvement Report.
2. Each Team Member is to actively engage in all consensus decision-making of the Visiting Team.
3. Each Team Member is assigned one of the Areas of the School Improvement Report. The areas of School Profile and Mission and Belief Statements may be joined as one responsibility in the case of a small team. If necessary, the Action Plan Area may be shared by the entire Team.
4. Each Team Member is assigned to one or more Interviews/Meetings by the Visiting Team Chairperson.
5. Each Team Member is assigned several standards to review on the Standards Checklist and is to prepare recommendations for the standards as needed. These recommendations are shared with and agreed upon by all the Team Members.
6. Each Team Member observes classrooms in the section assigned by the Visiting Team Chairperson and shares his/her over-all observations with the Visiting Team.

7. Each Team Member is to prepare a working draft of at least one-two commendations and recommendations for the assigned areas of the School Improvement Report. This draft is to be shared with and agreed upon by all the Team Members.

### **C. Visitation Schedule**

A sample Visitation Schedule may be found in the **Appendix, pp. 31.**

### **D. Interviews and Meetings**

The following meetings/interviews are held within the course of the Visitation:

1. meeting with students,
2. meeting with parents,
3. meeting with Area Section Committees
4. meetings with School Administration/Steering Committee
5. Interviews with special personnel such as:
  - a. Religion Coordinator
  - b. Technology Coordinator and Media Specialist
  - c. Guidance Director / Resource Teacher
  - d. Pastor
  - e. Others?
  - f.

### **E. Classroom Observations**

Members of the Visiting Team will conduct brief, spot check visits to classrooms to observe the rapport between teacher and students and to gain a “flavor” of the school instructional program.

### **F. First Day of Visitation**

The following events/activities should take place on the first day of the Visitation:

1. a meeting for orientation of Team Members,
2. a tour of the school campus and facilities,
3. a meeting with school administration and Steering Committee, and
4. opening activity for presentation of Executive Summary, School Profile, and Mission and Belief Statements. **(Note: This opening activity could be a reception for parents and interested school community representatives. The presentation could be in the form of a computer presentation, student presentations, etc. It is recommended that the program open with a special liturgical prayer.)**

## **G. Second Day of Visitation**

The following events/activities should take place on the second day of the Visitation:

1. Visiting Team meetings for work activities, research of school documents, and sharing of observations, questions, etc.,
2. meeting with student representatives,
3. meeting with group of parents, board members, etc.,
4. school personnel interviews,
5. classroom observations, and
6. meetings with members of the five major Area Committees.

## **H.. Third Day of Visitation**

The following events/activities should take place on the third day of the Visitation:

1. Submission of vouchers to school administration,
2. Visiting Team meetings for work activities, research of school documents, preparation of Oral Exit Report, and sharing of observations, questions, etc.,
3. meeting(s) with school administration, pastor, and Steering Committee,
4. meeting at end of day for Oral Exit Report.

## **I. Oral Exit Report**

The Oral Exit Report is given at the end of the Visitation to a small group of school community representatives: pastor, principal, faculty, staff, School Board and Home and School officers, and other school community representatives and participants in the School Improvement process. This report should focus on key observations, strengths and recommendations made by the Visiting Team during the Visit. The Visiting Team Chairperson explains that the final Written Report of the Visiting Team findings will be completed and copies sent to the school and the members of the FCC Accreditation Committee. No formal recommendation concerning accreditation is given as this will be determined by the FCC Accreditation Committee. **(See Appendix, *Oral Exit Report Outline*, p. 46.)**

## **J. Written Report**

The Written Report is developed by each Team Member preparing his/her section of the report. Each of the area sections should contain a short introduction or commentary, commendations, and recommendations. Any recommendations concerning Standards are also included. The Chairperson will obtain consensus on each section and the Standards and on the concepts of the introduction, final evaluation and summary as drafted by the Chairperson.

Attached to the narrative report is a Certification of the School Improvement Report and compliance with the Accreditation Standards. This Certification is signed by all members of the Visiting Team.

The Chairperson is responsible for preparing the final Written Report. It is the Chairperson's responsibility to edit and revise the material of the Report for style, cohesion, and thoroughness.

The Chairperson is responsible for submitting a copy of the Report to the principal, the principal's superintendent, the Visiting Team Members, and the members of the FCC Accreditation Committee.

**(See Appendix, *Sample Outline for Written Report*, pp. 47-55)**

## **APPENDIX**

**FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE (FCC)  
VISITATION READINESS**

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SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINCIPAL: \_\_\_\_\_

DIOCESE: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ School has completed its School Improvement Report and submitted it to our diocesan office. I have reviewed the Report and found it to be complete and satisfactory.

Therefore, I certify that the school is in readiness for its on-site visitation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Superintendent of Schools

(This completion form is to be submitted to the FCC Accreditation Committee prior to the Committee's scheduling the on-site visit for the school.)

**FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE (FCC)  
REVIEW OF PERSONNEL FILES**

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**SCHOOL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINCIPAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DIOCESE:** \_\_\_\_\_

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I certify that I have reviewed the personnel files of \_\_\_\_\_

School for both instructional and non-instructional personnel according to *FCC Principles and Standards*, Area E, #12 Personnel Files, p. 13. All files are in order and contain such necessary documentation as Teaching Certificate, Statement of Eligibility for Certification, Grandfather Clause, Letter of Qualification, Limited Teaching Endorsement and Catechist Certificate for Religion Teachers.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Superintendent of Schools)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(This validation of review of personnel files is to be submitted to the FCC Accreditation Committee and to the school's principal at least one month prior to the Preliminary Visit.)

**SAMPLE  
ACCEPTANCE LETTER**

Date

Principal  
School  
Address

Dear :

It is with pleasure that I accept as chairperson for the FCC Accreditation Visiting Team for your school. As we discussed on the phone today, the Visit will take place on March 19-21, 2003. This would mean that the Team will arrive Sunday afternoon, March 19<sup>th</sup>, begin the process with the reception for interested members of the School Community that evening; conduct observations, interviews, and meetings relative to the validation of the School Improvement Report on March 20-21; and have the Oral Exit Report read at the end of the school day on March 21<sup>st</sup>.

In addition, as planned, I will come to the school for the Preliminary Visit on Friday, February 7, 2003. I would appreciate it if you would inform your pastor of this visit so that I might have the opportunity of a short visit with him on this day.

I am looking forward to meeting you and visiting the school. If I can be of any assistance to answer questions or whatever, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will be in touch with you next fall concerning the particulars of the Preliminary Visit.

Sincerely,

Name

cc; Mr. James Herzog, FCC Accreditation Program Manager  
Superintendent of School Principal

**SAMPLE  
PRELIMINARY VISIT  
LETTER**

Date

Principal  
School  
Address

Dear :

This letter is to confirm the arrangements for my Preliminary Visit to your school on Friday, February 7, 2003, to assist you in your final preparation for your schools' FCC Accreditation Visitation. I will be driving to the school and will arrive at approximately 7:45 a.m.

I would like to visit with you and your Steering Committee Chairperson in the morning to review the School Improvement Report and prepare the schedule and arrangements for the on-site visit. I would like to meet with the pastor during the day for a short, informal visit to acquaint him with the purpose and procedures of the Visitation and to answer any questions he might have. I would also like to meet with the faculty at the end of the school day for a short, orientation meeting.

During the day, I would like to examine the school personnel credentials, using the **Review of Personnel Records**, the checklist prepared by your superintendent, and Area D: Personnel of the **FCC Principles and Standards**.

As we will be discussing preparations for the on-site visit, I would appreciate it if you would have prepared some ideas on housing for the team, a work area in the school for the team, possible times for student and parent meeting, etc. Together, then, we can finalize the plans and prepare the schedule for the Visitation on March 19-21, 2003.

Perhaps in the afternoon we can take a thorough tour of the buildings and campus to make sure all is in order and to assess if there are any needs that should be taken care of before the visit.

I have enclosed an outline of the areas I would like to cover during the Preliminary Visit. You may also want to review the **Principal's Checklist for Visitation** which is in the Appendix of the **FCC Visitation Manual**.

Please send me a copy of your School Improvement Report. I will need it about a month before the Preliminary Visit.

I look forward to my visit with you. If you have any further questions concerning the Preliminary Visit, do not hesitate to call me at .....

Sincerely,

cc: Mr. James Herzog, FCC Accreditation Program Manager  
Superintendent of Local School

**SAMPLE  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER  
FOR PRELIMINARY VISIT**

Date

Principal  
School  
Address

Dear :

This letter is a follow-up to my Preliminary Visit to your school on February 7, 2003. I so enjoyed my visit and the opportunity to meet Father Brown, your pastor, and your faculty. Everyone seemed so friendly and professional. Your children were a delight!

I am enclosing with this letter a sample copy of my letter to the Team Members and a copy of the finalized Accreditation Visit Schedule. I trust all will meet with your approval. I would remind you that the Schedule can be revised to meet any changing needs that may occur.

I am enclosing the following materials for your use:

- A. **Review of Personnel Credentials.** All was in order except the missing certification documents for Jane Doe.
- B. **Voucher Form.** Please have a copy of this form placed in each Team member's folder.

I would suggest that you refer to the **Appendix** of the **FCC Visitation Manual** for the **Principals' Checklist for Visitation** for a quick review of materials to be ready for the Visitation. I would also remind you of the following which I would ask that you have ready for Visitation.

- 1. Name tags for faculty and Team Members
- 2. Copies of School Schedule for each Team Member's folder
- 3. Preparation of **Supporting Data** in the Team Meeting Room to support the work of the Area Committees in preparing the School Improvement Report.
- 4. Information on the hotel, its address and phone number, sent to Team Members.

I will be arriving on Southwest Airlines, flight #45 at 12:00 noon on Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup>. I appreciate the fact that you will have arranged to have someone pick me up and drive me to the hotel.

Thank you again for your warm hospitality extended to me during the Preliminary Visit. I look forward to returning on March 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning the on-site Visitation. In the meantime, if there is any way I can assist you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Enc.

cc: Mr. James Herzog, FCC Accreditation Program Manager  
Superintendent of Local School

**SAMPLE  
WELCOME LETTER TO TEAM MEMBER**

Date

Team Member  
School  
Address

Dear :

As chairperson, I am pleased to welcome you to the FCC Visiting Team for .....School in ..... It will be a pleasure to work with you. I'm sure you will enjoy your visit with the school and its fine staff and warm hospitality.

On February 7, 2003, I completed the Preliminary Visitation at .....School and found all in order and readiness for the Visitation. The principal,....., and I developed a Visitation Schedule which is enclosed for your information. Please note that you are asked to arrive at the hotel by 1:00 p.m. We will begin our Visitation with a Team Orientation at 2:00 p.m. at the school. This will be followed by a meeting with the School Administration and the Steering Committee and a tour of the school. There will be a reception at the school hall at 7:00 p.m. where the school will present the major components of its School Profile and Mission and Belief Statements.

You should have received a copy of the school's School Improvement Report. I ask you to read it carefully and thoroughly, noting any questions or clarification to be resolved at the time of Visitation. I am enclosing a listing of the Team Members' Areas of Responsibilities for the Visit. I trust that the assigned areas will be acceptable to you. You will be responsible to meet with the members of this area committee and to review the assigned standards for full compliance. In addition, you are asked to interview the school personnel listed on your sheet.

Please be sure to notify the principal and myself of your travel arrangements. You will note from the schedule that you should be able to leave the school on Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> by about 3:00 p.m.

If you have any questions concerning the Visitation, please do not hesitate to contact either the principal or myself.

I am looking forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

cc: Principal

**SAMPLE  
THANK YOU LETTER TO TEAM MEMBER**

Date

Team Member  
School  
Address

Dear :

Thank you so much for serving on the Visiting Team for .....’s FCC Accreditation Visit. It was a delight to work with you and the Team. You were an excellent addition to the Team and worked with great professionalism and sensitivity to the school, its community, and its needs. I would be pleased to have you on a FCC Visiting Team again.

Thank you, also for the fine work that you did on the final report. Your work was well done and indicated a good professional sense of what is need in a good Catholic elementary school and its provisions for excellence in student performance.

I have sent a copy of the official report to the FCC Accreditation Committee and the principal. Enclosed is your copy of the report.

Thank you again for your assistance. It was an honor and a pleasure to work with you.

Sincerely,

**FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE (FCC)  
CHAIRPERSON'S CHECKLIST FOR PRELIMINARY VISIT**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Preliminary Visit**
2. \_\_\_\_\_ **School Improvement Report Received**
3. \_\_\_\_\_ **Arrangements for Preliminary Visit Made**
4. \_\_\_\_\_ **Meetings Arranged:**
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ **Principal & Steering Committee Chairperson**
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ **Pastor**
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ **Faculty**
5. \_\_\_\_\_ **Meeting with Principal/ Steering Committee Chairperson:**
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ **Explanation of procedures of Preliminary Visit and on-site Visitation**
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ **Review of School Improvement Report, previous Visitation Report, and ARCA's**
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ **Arrangements for Visitation**
    - C \_\_\_\_\_ **Schedule**
    - C \_\_\_\_\_ **Housing & Meals**
    - C \_\_\_\_\_ **Travel**
    - C \_\_\_\_\_ **Vouchers**
    - C \_\_\_\_\_ **School Schedule**
    - C \_\_\_\_\_ **Work Room & Materials for Folders**
    - C \_\_\_\_\_ **Documents for Work Room**
    - C \_\_\_\_\_ **Computer, etc.**
    - C \_\_\_\_\_ **School floor plan**
6. \_\_\_\_\_ **Examination of Records/Files:**
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ **Superintendent's *Review of Personnel Files* report**
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ **Diocesan Personnel Checklist (or other such form)**
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ **Area D: Personnel (FCC Principles and Standards - 2006)**
7. \_\_\_\_\_ **Meeting with Pastor**
8. \_\_\_\_\_ **Tour of school**
9. \_\_\_\_\_ **Faculty Meeting**
10. \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact (arch)diocesan office for verification of readiness for Visitation**

## FCC PRELIMINARY VISIT

### ST. GLORIANA SCHOOL ANYTOWN, FLORIDA

January 12, 2003

Arrive at school (around 7:45 - 8:00 a.m.)

Meet with Principal and Steering Committee Chairperson

- C review School Improvement Report
- C review previous Visitation Report
- C review current ARCA and ARCA's of previous two years
- C prepare Visitation schedule
- C make arrangements for lodging of Visitation team members
- C make arrangements for Visitation work area, equipment, supplies, etc.
- C obtain school schedule with times for arrival, dismissal, lunch, etc.
- C obtain floor plan of school
- C arrange for voucher forms for Visitation team members
- C arrange times and rooms for interviews and meetings during Visitation

Meet with Pastor (Priest-in-Charge) to acquaint him with procedures of Visitation

Review of personnel credentials using Superintendent's Checklist and Area D:  
Personnel of **FCC Principles and Standards**

Tour school plant

Call Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools re: School's Readiness

Meet with Faculty at end of school day

**Note: These activities can occur in whatever order is best for the schedule of the Principal, Steering Committee Chairperson, and FCC chairperson.**



## **FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE (FCC) PRINCIPAL'S CHECKLIST FOR VISITATION**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Preliminary Visit
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of Visitation
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Contact (Arch)diocesan Office concerning dates for Preliminary Visit and on-site Visitation
4. \_\_\_\_\_ School Improvement Report
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewed by Superintendent
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ Sent to Chairperson and Superintendent one month BEFORE Preliminary Visit
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ Sent to Team Members one month BEFORE Visitation
5. \_\_\_\_\_ School Personnel Files reviewed by Superintendent
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Arrangements for Visiting Team
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ Housing
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ Travel (includes travel to and from school, if necessary, and airport pick-up)
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ Meals
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ Work area for Visiting Team
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_ Hospitality
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Introductory meeting with Pastor during Preliminary Visit
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Name tags for Faculty
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Reimbursement of expenses to Visiting Team

### **Materials for Preliminary Visit**

10. \_\_\_\_\_ School Improvement Report
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Copies of superintendent's reports for Readiness and Personnel Files
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Previous Visitation Report
13. \_\_\_\_\_ ARCA's for present year and previous two years
14. \_\_\_\_\_ School Files in order: personnel and student files
15. \_\_\_\_\_ School schedule with arrival and dismissal times, lunch, etc.

### Visiting Team Folders

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Name tags
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Visitation Schedule
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher and Class Schedules
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty List and Assignments
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Floor plan of school
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Voucher forms for Visiting Team Member expenses
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Other

### Visiting Team Work Room

8. \_\_\_\_\_ School Handbooks: teacher, student, parent
9. \_\_\_\_\_ School and Diocesan Policy Manuals
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Current salary scale
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Current registration/tuition forms
12. \_\_\_\_\_ School budget
13. \_\_\_\_\_ Current enrollment figures
14. \_\_\_\_\_ Current textbook list
15. \_\_\_\_\_ Previous Visitation Report
16. \_\_\_\_\_ Current and previous two years ARCA's
17. \_\_\_\_\_ Student Publications (samples of yearbooks, newspapers, etc.)
18. \_\_\_\_\_ Personnel File Checklist
19. \_\_\_\_\_ Documents supporting School Improvement Report  
(Surveys, statistics, etc.)
20. \_\_\_\_\_ Computer(s) and printer
21. \_\_\_\_\_ Light refreshments
22. \_\_\_\_\_ Other (access to rest room, copier)

**Initial Event/Meeting**

- 23. \_\_\_\_\_ Invitation to School Community Representatives
- 24. \_\_\_\_\_ Multi-media materials (microphone, lectern, computer, screen, etc.
- 25. \_\_\_\_\_ Copy(ies) of School Improvement Report
- 26. \_\_\_\_\_ Copy(ies) of FCC Principles and Standards
- 27. \_\_\_\_\_ Opening Liturgical Prayer
- 28. \_\_\_\_\_ Presentation Materials:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ Executive Summary
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ School Profile
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ Mission and Belief Statements
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ Other
- 29. \_\_\_\_\_ Light refreshments

**FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE (FCC)  
SAMPLE VISITATION SCHEDULE**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2003**

- 2:00 p.m. Organizational Meeting for Visiting Team Members at School  
3:00 p.m. Tour of School Campus and Facilities  
4:00 p.m. Meeting with School Administration and Steering Committee  
5:00 p.m. Dinner for Visiting Team
- 7:00 p.m. School Reception  
(Opening Liturgical Prayer and Presentation of Executive Summary,  
School Profile, and Mission and Beliefs Statement)

**THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2003**

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast for Visiting Team  
8:00 a.m. Visiting Team Meeting  
8:30 a.m. Meeting with Students  
9:30 a.m. Meeting with Parents/ School Community Representatives  
10:30 a.m. Classroom Observations / School Personnel Interviews  
11:30 a.m. Team Meeting (debriefing)  
12:00 noon Lunch for Visiting Team  
1:00 p.m. Classroom Observations / School Personnel Interviews  
2:00 p.m. Visiting Team Meeting (Consensus Building for Report/ Standards  
Compliance, Checklists, etc.)  
3:00 p.m. Meetings with Area Committees  
4:00 p.m. Meeting with Action Plan Committee/ Steering Committee  
5:00 p.m. Visiting Team Debriefing  
6:00 p.m. Adjournment  
6:45 p.m. Dinner for Visiting Team  
\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Work Session (writing commendations,  
recommendations, etc.)

**FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2002**

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast for Visiting Team  
8:00 a.m. Visiting Team Meeting (Review of Sections for Report, Standards  
Compliance, etc.)  
9:00 a.m. Meeting with School Administration and Steering Committee  
11:00 a.m. Visiting Team Meeting and Individual Work Session for Report  
12:00 noon Lunch for Visiting Team  
1:00 p.m. Visiting Team Meeting (Final review, Standards Compliance, etc.)  
2:00 p.m. Oral Exit Report

## TEAM ORIENTATION MEETING

**Welcome:** Introduction of members

**Prayer**

**Purpose of Visitation:** Fact Finding  
Validation of School Improvement Report  
Assess Action Plan in light of improving student performance  
Accreditation of **Catholic** school

**Assignments / Responsibilities:**

Review folders from Chairperson with schedules, interviews, etc.  
Note times of gathering of Visiting Team

**A. Role / Responsibilities**

- C read thoroughly the school's SIP Report
- C familiarize selves with accreditation standards
- C need for the following before, during, and after Visit:
  - objectivity
  - confidentiality
  - professionalism
  - objectivity
- C validate report and affirm school and its faculty
- C work in a collaborate manner, striving for consensus for the report

**B. Individual Assignments for Areas of Report, Interviews, and Standards**

**C. Area Guide Sheets for Report**

- C Brief Comments
- C Commendations
- C Recommendations

**D. Standards Checklist**

- C Guide Sheets
- C Recommendations

**E. Interviews / Meetings**

- C Everyone attends Parent & Student Meetings
- C Everyone attends Administration / Steering Committee Meetings
- C Area Section Committee - attend assigned area
- C School Personnel Interviews - assigned committee member / open to others

**F. Classroom Visits**

- C Choose area /section
- C Short / 10 minute visits
- C "Blitz" an area
- C Get "flavor" of teacher/student rapport, style of teaching methodology

**Review of Visitation Schedule**

**Review of Preliminary Visit/ Unique Situations of School**

**Purpose of "Reception" / Opening Event**

**Adjournment**

## FIRST MORNING MEETING ON SECOND DAY

**Welcome**

**Questions**

**Resources:** FCC Principles and Standards - June 2002  
FCC Policies and Procedures - June 2003  
FCC School Improvement Process - 2nd ed.- December 2003  
FCC Visitation Manual - 1<sup>st</sup> ed. December 2003  
School's School Improvement Report  
School Documents in Work Area

**Vouchers:** \$150 honorarium for team members  
Travel expenses / meals?

**Commendations / Recommendations:**

Prepare 2-5 possible commendations / recommendations for assigned area of report

**Process for Parent / Student Meetings:** Sample Interview Questions

**Process for School Personnel Interviews:** Sample Interview Questions

**Adjournment**

## TEAM MEETING - DEBRIEFING AFTER INTERVIEWS

- A. Team Members share comments concerning meetings with Students and Parents / Community Representatives.**
- B. Team Members share comments concerning School Personnel Interviews**
- C. Preliminary Assessment:** What has been validated as a strength?  
What has been validated as needing improvement?  
What questions remain unanswered?  
What needs to be looked at more carefully?

**Adjournment**

## AFTERNOON MEETING - SECOND DAY

- A. Team Members share comments concerning School Personnel Interviews.**
- B. Procedures for Area Section Committee Meetings:**
  - C Sample Questions
  - C Team Members and their specific questions (may also invite previous questions from other Team Members)
  - C Ask Area Committee Members to :
    - explain process
    - indicate satisfaction with resulting information
    - clarify any questions
  - C Team Members share concerns or “beginnings” of recommendations
- C. Communication Issues:**
  - C members are to communicate with each other any deficiencies noted
  - C Personnel questions / recommendations to \_\_\_\_\_ (chairperson)
  - C Facilities questions / recommendations to \_\_\_\_\_(assigned Team Member)
  - C Curriculum questions / recommendations to \_\_\_\_\_(assigned Team Member)
- D. Adjournment**

**TEAM MEETING - DEBRIEFING AFTER AREA COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- A. Team Members share comments concerning meetings with Area Committees**
  - B. Preliminary Assessments:** Was the process of the Committee a collaborative one?  
Were there problems with the process?  
Does the Committee concur on their findings?  
Were there problems?  
What needs to be looked at more carefully?  
Do the Team Members have concerns about the work of the Area Committees?
  - C. Is there a need for a meeting with Administration and/or the Steering Committee?**
  - D. Individual Work Sessions;** Team Members will work tonight on:
    - C Area Section: Brief Commentary  
Commendations  
Recommendations
    - C Standards: Met  
Met with Recommendations  
Not Met
- \* Write recommendations, if needed.**
- E. Questions**
  - F. Adjournment**

## **WORK / TEAM MEETINGS - THIRD DAY**

**\*Note:** Throughout the course of the day, these items must be taken care of . The chairperson should schedule work times and sharing times as needed. It is important that the Visiting Team work for consensus in preparing the material for the final Written Report.

- 1. Review process for Oral Exit Report and Written Report**
- 2. Questions for Administration / Steering Committee Meeting**
- 3. Submission of Vouchers**
- 4. Review Standards Checklist and possible Recommendations**
- 5. Review Area Reports:**
  - Brief Commentary
  - Commendations
  - Recommendations
- 6. Review SIP Certification Form and seek consensus for comments/decisions**
- 7. Obtain signature for SIP Certification Form**
- 8. Prepare Oral Exit Report**
- 9, Adjournment**

**FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE (FCC)  
SAMPLE TEAM MEMBER ASSIGNMENTS**

- |               |                       |  |
|---------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1.            | <u>Team Member #1</u> | <b>1-School Profile &amp; 2-Mission and Belief Statements</b><br><br>Standards: Areas A, B, H<br><br>Personnel Interviews: Religion Coordinator/ Pastor                          |
| 2.            | <u>Team Member #2</u> | <b>3-Desired Results</b><br><br>Standards: Areas C, G<br><br>Personnel Interviews: Guidance Director/ Resource<br>Teacher  |
| 3.            | Chairperson           | <b>4-Analyzing Instructional &amp; Organizational<br/>Effectiveness</b><br><br>Standards: Areas D, E, F<br><br>Personnel Interviews: Technology Coordinator/ Media<br>Specialist |
| Visiting Team |                       | <b>5 - Action Plan</b>   |

**Note:** This schedule of assignments can be varied according to the number of Team Members. The Chairperson could take the Action Plan instead of the entire Team. However, it is best if the standards relating to personnel and administration be assigned to the Chairperson.

# SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR INTERVIEWS / MEETINGS

## SCHOOL PERSONNEL INTERVIEWS

Thursday, March 20 (10:30 a.m.)

Religion Coordinator / Pastor

Room: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Director / Resource Teacher

Room: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thursday, March 20 (1:00 p.m.)

Technology Coord./Media Specialist

Room: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## STUDENT MEETING

Thursday, March 20

(8:30 a.m.)

Room: \_\_\_\_\_

## PARENT / COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

Thursday, March 20

(9:30 a.m.)

Room: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ADMINISTRATION / STEERING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 19

(4:00 p.m.)

Room: \_\_\_\_\_

Friday, March 21

(11:00 a.m.)

Room: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Note: Additional meetings may be held as needed and the Pastor is always invited to attend these meetings, if he wishes**

**AREA SECTION COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday, March 20 (3:00 p.m.)**

**1 - School Profile Team Member:\_\_\_\_\_ Room:\_\_\_\_\_**

**2 - Mission & Beliefs**

**3 - Desired Results Team Member:\_\_\_\_\_ Room:\_\_\_\_\_**

**4 - Analy. Instr. & Organ. Team Member:\_\_\_\_\_ Room:\_\_\_\_\_**

**Thursday, March 20 (4:00 p.m.)**

**5 - Action Plan Team Room:\_\_\_\_\_**

**\*Note: This schedule can be adjusted as needed. If additional information is needed, the assigned Team Member can contact the Area Section Chairperson.**

## GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT MEETING

### Guidelines for Conducting Meeting

1. The **Chairperson** explains the purpose of the Visitation and the Student Meeting, and provides some background as to the School Improvement Process and Report.
2. The **Chairperson** reminds students that the Visiting Team will treat their responses in a confidential manner.
3. It would be helpful for a Team Member to briefly record student comments.
4. All Team Members are encouraged to engage students in dialogue.

### Possible Questions

1. What do you like best about the school?
2. What do you think are the greatest strengths of the school?
3. If you could make changes in your school, what kind of changes would you make?
4. What does it mean to you to say that this is a **Catholic** school?
5. How would you describe your school to someone who was moving into the community?  
Would you recommend the school to them? Why or why not?
6. What is the Mission / Purpose of this school?
7. Are you familiar with or have you been involved in the School Improvement Planning Process? Explain.
8. Others?

## **GUIDELINES FOR PARENT/ SCHOOL COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES MEETING**

### **Guidelines for Conducting Meeting**

1. The **Chairperson** explains the purpose of the Visitation and the Parent/ School Community Representatives Meeting and provides some background as to the School Improvement Process and Report.
2. The **Chairperson** reminds parents and representatives that the Visiting Team will treat their responses in a confidential manner.
3. It would be helpful for a Team Member to briefly record student comments.
4. All Team Members are encouraged to engage parents and representatives in dialogue.

### **Possible Questions**

1. What do you like best about the school?
2. What do you think are the greatest strengths of the school?
3. Are there needs that should be addressed to make this an even better school?
4. Identify what you would like to see changed or improved in this school.
5. What are the signs that identify this as a Catholic school?
6. How does the school communicate with you?
7. How can you communicate with the school?
8. Are you familiar with or have you been involved in the School Improvement Process which the school has just completed?
9. How have you been involved? Was it helpful to you?
10. Are you aware of the Mission and Belief Statements of the school? Do you agree with them? Why? Why not?
11. Did you have an opportunity to provide feedback on the school's priorities for improving student performance that were identified in the SIP Report? Do you agree with them?
12. Others.

## GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL INTERVIEWS

### Possible Questions

1. Describe your position and responsibilities at the school.
2. What do you think is your role in the school and why do you think it is integral to the total organization of the school?
3. From your perspective, what are the instructional and organizational strengths of the school?  
What are the instructional and organizational areas of the school needing improvement.
4. Do you agree with the priorities for improving student performance as stated in the School Improvement Report?  
Why? Why not?
5. What has been your role and involvement in the School Improvement Process?
6. How do you see your role and involvement in the implementation of the Action Plan for your school?
7. Others.

## **GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION / STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **Guidelines for Conducting Meeting**

1. The **Chairperson** explains the purpose of this meeting is to validate and clarify the process used in the School Improvement Planning and Process.
2. The **Chairperson** reminds the Administration and Steering Committee that the Visiting Team will treat their responses in a confidential manner.
3. It would be helpful for a Team Member to briefly record comments.
4. All Team Members are encouraged to engage the Administration and Steering Committee Members in dialogue.
5. The **Chairperson** should allow time for housekeeping or schedule details to be addressed
6. The **Visiting Team** should ask questions that need clarification as to the on-going process of the Visitation.

### **Possible Questions**

1. Describe the process and activities to prepare the School Improvement Report.
2. How did you provide for good communication about and throughout the process?
3. What did you do to provide collaboration and involvement of the total school community in the process?
4. Please share some positive developments that have resulted from the School Improvement Process.
5. What have been the most difficult aspects of the School Improvement Process? Why? Are these being addressed? If so, how? If not? why not?
6. Do you agree with the outcomes and target areas of the process? If so, why? If not, why not?
7. What would you do differently the next time?
8. What plan is in place or in process to carry out the implementation of the Action Plan?

## GUIDELINES FOR AREA SECTION COMMITTEE MEETING

### Guidelines for Conducting Meeting

1. The **Assigned Team Member** explains the purpose of the meeting is to ask questions about the School Improvement Process and work of this Area Committee.
- 2, The **Assigned Team Member** seeks to clarify questions about or information given in the School Improvement Process.
3. The **Assigned Team Member** seeks to determine the level of collaboration involved in the Committee's work.
4. The **Assigned Team Member** should seek to determine the validity of the data provided in the Committee's work.
5. It is recommended that the **Focus Questions** of the **NSSE Visiting Team Handbook** be used as possible questions.
6. The **Assigned Team Member** should affirm the work of the Committee and share any possible recommendations for improvement.

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### Post Meeting Responsibilities

1. The **Assigned Team Member** shares with the Visiting Team the information gleaned from the meeting.
2. The **Assigned Team Member** provides the **Chairperson** with commendations and recommendations concerning the Area Section of the School Improvement Report.
3. The **Assigned Team Member**, if necessary, consults with the **Chairperson and/or the Visiting Team** for assistance in resolving any problems, conflicts, etc. that may have arisen during the Area Committee Meeting or with regards to the Report

## ORAL EXIT REPORT OUTLINE

**Note:** The Oral Exit Report is a summary of the Visiting Team's findings. The Chairperson of the Visiting Team presides. The following is a suggested format for the Report.

1. The Chairperson thanks the principal, pastor, faculty, staff, and school community for their hospitality during the visit.
2. The chairperson recognizes all the members of the school community for their hard work during the writing and development of the School Improvement Plan. The Chairperson affirms and congratulates them for the completion of the Plan.
3. The Chairperson recognizes the other members of the Visiting Team and indicates their home dioceses, schools, and professional positions.
4. The Chairperson explains the importance of the school's development of a School Improvement Plan as it relates to the:
  - a. school's accreditation by the Florida Catholic Conference Accreditation Program,
  - b. stakeholder's involvement in the process,
  - c. process culminating in the development of an action plan, and
  - d. process ensuring the continued growth of the school.
5. The Chairperson explains the importance of having the Visiting Team visit the school in order to:
  - a. validate the completed School Improvement Plan,
  - b. validate the process followed by the school in completing the Plan,
  - c. analyze the Action Plan, based on the data derived from the stakeholders' input throughout the process, and
  - d. affirm the work of the school community in completing the Plan.
6. The Visiting Team members summarize their findings. The Chairperson gives them the opportunity to:
  - a. thank the members of the school community for their hospitality,
  - b. state their areas of responsibility, and
  - c. briefly indicate commendations and recommendations for their areas of responsibility,
7. The Chairperson concludes the Oral Report by summarizing the over-all strengths of the school and the general recommendations made by the Visiting Team. The Chairperson states that the final written report of the Visiting Team will be completed and forwarded to the school and to the FCC Accreditation Committee within the next three weeks. No formal recommendation concerning accreditation will be given at this time, as the accreditation status will be determined by the Accreditation Committee

**SAMPLE  
OUTLINE FOR  
WRITTEN REPORT**

**(TITLE PAGE)**

**Florida Catholic Conference  
Accreditation Program**

**Visitation Report**

**for**

**Name of School  
School Address**

\_\_\_\_\_, **Principal**

\_\_\_\_\_, **Diocese**

\_\_\_\_\_, **Superintendent**

**Dates**

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## VISITING TEAM

**NAME** (Chairperson)

Position

School / Diocesan Office

Address

**NAME**

Position

School / Diocesan Office

Address

**NAME**

Position

School / Diocesan Office

Address

**NAME**

Position

School / Diocesan Office

Address

**FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE  
SAMPLE VISITATION SCHEDULE**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2003**

- 2:00 p.m. Organizational Meeting for Visiting Team Members at School
- 3:00 p.m. Tour of School Campus and Facilities
- 4:00 p.m. Meeting with School Administration and Steering Committee
- 5:00 p.m. Dinner for Visiting Team
  
- 7:00 p.m. School Reception  
(Opening Liturgical Prayer and Presentation of Executive Summary,  
School Profile, and Mission and Beliefs Statement)

**THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2003**

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast for Visiting Team
- 8:00 a.m. Visiting Team Meeting
- 8:30 a.m. Meeting with Students
- 9:30 a.m. Meeting with Parents/ School Community Representatives
- 10:30 a.m. Classroom Observations / School Personnel Interviews
- 11:30 a.m. Team Meeting (debriefing)
- 12:00 noon Lunch for Visiting Team
- 1:00 p.m. Classroom Observations / School Personnel Interviews
- 2:00 p.m. Visiting Team Meeting (Consensus Building for Report / Standards  
Compliance, Checklists, etc.)
- 3:00 p.m. Meetings with Area Committees
- 4:00 p.m. Meeting with Action Plan Committee / Steering Committee
- 5:00 p.m. Visiting Team Debriefing
- 6:00 p.m. Adjournment
- 5:45 p.m. Dinner for Visiting Team  
Individual Work Session (writing commendations  
Recommendations, etc.)

**FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2003**

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast for Visiting Team
- 8:00 a.m. Visiting Team Meeting (Review of Sections for Report, Standards  
Compliance, etc.)
- 9:00 a.m. Meeting with School Administration and Steering Committee
- 11:00 a.m. Visiting Team Meeting and Individual Work Session for Report
- 12:00 noon Lunch for Visiting Team
- 1:00 p.m. Visiting Team Meeting (Final review, Standards Compliance, etc.)
- 2:00 p.m. Oral Exit Report

## INTRODUCTION

*(The Introduction should be about 2 pages in length and include the following items:*

The Visiting Team, representing the Florida Catholic Conference (FCC), made an on-site visit to \_\_\_\_\_ School in \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_. The on-site visit was in fulfillment of the peer review phase of the NSSE/ FCC School Improvement Process. Members of the Visiting Team included: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

The objectives of this on-site accreditation visit were:

1. to assure the FCC Accreditation Committee of the viability of the school's School Improvement Report and its Action Plan,
2. to identify and commend the strengths of the school,
3. to develop recommendations to strengthen the school's efforts for the improvement of the quality of its program,
4. to bring objective expertise to assist in the school's current evaluation and its future planning,
5. to assess the school's compliance with Accreditation standards,
6. to develop a Written Report of the Visitation Team's findings, and
7. to make a recommendation concerning the school's Accreditation status.

*(Indicate the demographic information about the school - type of school, location, founding of school, initial accreditation, grade structure, enrollment, professional staff, etc.)*

*(Give a brief description of the school's academic and extracurricular program.)*

*(Indicate the progress the school has made since its last Accreditation visit.)*

*(Indicate the overall parent, community, and student regard for the school and its programs.)*

*(Give a brief description of the Visitation process.)*

*(If applicable, indicate any unique situation or provision concerning the Visitation.)*

## (SAMPLE PAGE)

**(Note: At least one page should be prepared for each of the five areas of the School Improvement Process.)**

### **Development of the School Improvement Plan**

#### **Mission and Beliefs**

**Comments:** The work of defining St. Veritas School's Mission and Beliefs Statements was a collaborative effort involving parents, alumni, board members, students, and faculty. The Committee gathered information, organized it, and brought it back to the above groups for further refining and input. The resulting Mission Statement reflects the priority of education within a faith-filled community. Belief Statements are clearly written, concise, and truly representative of what happens at St. Veritas School. Students, parents, and faculty know and understand the Mission Statement and indicate an ownership of the school's mission.

#### **Commendations:**

1. A collaborative process was used in defining Mission and Belief Statements.
2. The Mission and Belief Statements are displayed in poster form in numerous areas around the school and will soon be placed on the school Web site.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. The school needs to continue to make the community aware of the school's mission and beliefs in public relations and communication materials such as the school Web site and newsletters.
2. The school is urged to revisit its Mission and Belief Statements annually for consensus or modifications.
3. The school should explore the possibility of beginning each school year with a faculty retreat day which includes reflection on the Mission Statement.

## RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO STANDARDS

(Note: **Recommendations should be listed in the order as given in FCC Principles and Standards.**

**These recommendations should result from a review of the Standards Checklist.)**

**A-6** The Mission and Belief Statements need to be continuously monitored in light of the school's changing nature.

**B-2** It is recommended that student community service activities be used to reinforce and relate classroom knowledge to the social needs of the school's community.

**D-15** In light of the school's acknowledgment of the need for additional professional development and the recommendations of the Visiting Team concerning the Action Plan, it is recommended that the school establish a plan for professional development that will enable the school to pursue its plan to improve student performance.

**F-10** The school needs to more thoroughly communicate and implement its access and use policy regarding technology in the school.

### **G-3 (Guidance)**

Staff development should be afforded to the entire faculty to increase their awareness and effectiveness in dealing with the special needs of their students now and in the future.

### **G-3 (Health and Safety)**

In accordance with the recent Fire Marshall's inspection, the school should implement the repair of the cafeteria ceiling.

### **G-4 (Health and Safety)**

Given the current situation in our country and our world, the administration is strongly encouraged to revise its Crisis Management plans to meet new needs.

## EVALUATION AND SUMMARY

*(This section should be about 2 pages in length and include the following:)*

1. *Overall impression and evaluation of the school.*
2. *Give a brief assessment of the school's involvement with the School Improvement Process.*
3. *Make a summation statement concerning the intent of the school staff and administration to carry out the Action Plan. Indicate their responsibility to:*
  - a. *implement the Action Plan focusing on the specific goals for student learning,*
  - b. *implement identified strategies to pursue the goals of student learning,*
  - c. *update and communicate the School Profile annually,*
  - d. *document growth in student learning and instructional and organizational effectiveness, and*
  - e. *review and revise each year, as necessary, the Action Plan*
4. *Indicate Written Report will be sent to the FCC Accreditation Committee for their review and granting of accreditation status.*
5. *Make a statement of appreciation for school's hospitality.*

**FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE (FCC)  
VOUCHER FORM - VISITING TEAM**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

**SCHOOL VISITED** \_\_\_\_\_

**TRAVEL:**

**CAR** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Submit receipt(s))**

**PLANE** \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER** \_\_\_\_\_

**MEALS** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Submit receipts(s))**

**HONORARIUM** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson:      \$300.00**  
**Team Member:     \$150.00**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Signature of Team Member)**