

# The National Independent

Private Schools Association

THERAPEUTIC HANDBOOK

### **2019-20**

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National Independent Private Schools Association

A Therapeutic Self Study Handbook/Guide

NIPSA Therapeutic Certification is an evaluative process for schools that describe themselves as therapeutic in nature and that have a component for addressing student needs in addition to that which is seen as traditionally academic. These criteria are designed to set high standards of performance in regards to personnel, safety, and quality of care. The process includes a comprehensive self-evaluative report by the school, followed by a site visit by a committee of peers in order to experience the school firsthand and to evaluate the accuracy of the report. To be recognized for NIPSA Therapeutic Certification a school must also meet, or have previously met, the criteria of NIPSA Academic Accreditation as set forth in the *Evaluative Criteria, NIPSA Accreditation and Therapeutic Certification Program, 2013* and must meet the criteria for Special Needs Schools described in Section 14.0 of that document.

While certification is not a guarantee of positive outcomes, we believe that schools that strive to meet these standards will have more likelihood of success.

1. *Philosophy and Goals*

Each school should have a clearly delineated mission from whence its philosophy of operation and its goals for the improvement of its clients and students emanate. In addition, the philosophy should be a public document and be part of explanatory and marketing materials that are used to tell patrons and the school community what they can expect from the program. There must be a description of the population served and the disorders or personality traits addressed by the program. DSM IV categories should be used and a description of the process that is used to determine admission to the therapeutic program should be provided.

2.   *Procedures*

Each school must describe in detail the specific scheduling of students for therapy and the nature of that therapy (group, family, individual, etc.), documentation and records kept for all activities, emergency care policies, policies for handling aberrant behavior or unusual events, disciplinary measures employed, appropriateness of staff training and assignments, and follow up procedures. Any and all policies that are unique to the program should be explained in detail.

3.   *Personnel*

Student safety often depends upon the effectiveness of staff. The school must include specific lines of communication among the therapeutic staff members, the selection criteria and evaluation procedures employed for staff members, qualification of staff (including background checks, educational experience and certification), and staff development implemented (including in-service, mentoring, probationary periods.) The level of staff expertise should be described (e.g., counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists on staff or consulting.)

4.   *Other Certifications*

If the school or program has established relationships, certifications or accreditations of the therapeutic program those should be described in detail and documentation should be provided as part of the self-study.

5.   *Medical Policies*

  There must be a complete explanation of any medical procedures employed, the staff members that are responsible to implement those procedures; and there must be written policies that insure safety, secure record keeping with HIPPA assurances, hospitalization policies, emergency policies and follow-up policies.

6.   *Evaluation*

 A complete explanation of program evaluation must be part of the study. A strategic or log-range plan must have been developed and any periodic re-evaluations of that plan should be part of the program policies and the self study report.

7.   *Office Procedures*

Office procedures must be included and must describe staff responsibilities for protection of records, enforcement of HIPPA regulations and all policies related to federal, state and local regulations.

8. *Dormitories and Housing*

Boarding school must also meet the criteria described in Section 11.0 of the *Evaluative Criteria, NIPSA Manual for the Self Study, 2010.*

# EVALUATIVE CRITERIA FOR SCHOOL THERAPEUTIC CERTIFICATION

### **A SELF-STUDY GUIDE**

Each of the following criteria must be addressed in your report. Please follow the numbering used to report your comments and observations. This report should then be included in the same binder with the Report of the Academic Self-Study, but separated and clearly marked, and should be titled Report of the Therapeutic Certification Self-Study. It should be noted that some emotional growth schools have a mix of students: some who require treatment and others who do not. Emotional growth schools may opt out of being clinically certified. If however it is found that they do in fact have clients who require treatment, and they are in fact providing treatment then being clinically certified maybe required.

NOTE: NOT ALL OF THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS ARE APPLICABLE TO ALL THERAPEUTIC LEVELS. SHOULD THAT BE THE CASE IN YOUR STUDY PLEASE MARK THE ITEM “ N/A” FOR NOT APPLICABLE, AND EXPLAIN WHY THAT IS THE CASE (Keep in mind, the committee may ask for additional clarification if they feel it is necessary.)

General Data

This section should include all of the current statistical information for the school.

Pertinent Information

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| School |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Address |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| City |  | State |  | Zip |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Phone |  | Fax |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name and Title of Head of School |  |

Type of School: (Enter information below)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Preschool |  | Elementary (Enter Grades) |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Middle/Junior (Enter Grades |  | High (Enter Grades) |  |

Organizational Structure

Describe the school’s classroom organization (i.e. self-contained, departmental, non-graded, etc.)

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| --- | --- |
| Enrollment (as of October 1st of the current school year |  |

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| --- | --- |
| Enrollment Three (3) Years Ago |  |

Present a brief history of the school.

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School Promotional Information, Admissions and Records

List methods used to give the community and parents of prospective students information about the school. *Append school brochures or catalogues.* *Include other materials in a supplementary file.*

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List the distinguishing characteristics that attract students to your school. Briefly describe admissions procedures. Please include entrance requirements, tests used, and other screening procedures.

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All NIPSA schools are required to have an anti-discrimination policy. Briefly describe how your policy is made public and how is it published. *Include copies in your appendix.*

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Compare present enrollment with school capacity.

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Describe how student progress is reported to parents. (*Include a copy of report card or other reporting instruments in appendix.)*

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Describe the system used to request records from a former school and to transfer student records from your school to student’s next school. *Include request/transmittal forms in appendix.*

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How are student and personnel records protected against fire, theft, vandalism, etc.? (It is required that adequate protection of school records be evident.)

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Are all required governmental permits and inspection reports current? *Include a copy of them in the appendix and supplementary file.*

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1 Describe methods taken to provide data security.

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Geographical Community

What community or city does your school serve?

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*Include a map (county or city road map acceptable) in the supplementary materials showing school and area served.*

. How are children transported to school? Indicate approximate percentages.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Parents |  | Car Pools |  | Bus |  |
| Public Trans. |  | Walk or Bike |  | Other |  |

What demographic changes are occurring in the community your school serves? How do you believe these changes will affect your school?

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1. Philosophy and Goals

1.1 Describe the philosophy and goals of the treatment program.

* 1. Explain how the philosophy and goals of the therapeutic program are communicated to the school community.  *Include examples in the appendix.*
  2. Describe the population served and the disorders or personality traits addressed by the program, and indicate below the DSM V categories by number that the school/program is designed to serve.

DSM V Diagnosis:      # students:      #mild:       #moderate       #serious       #acute

DSM V Diagnosis:      # students:      #mild:       #moderate       #serious       #acute

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DSM V Diagnosis:      # students:      #mild:       #moderate       #serious       #acute

DSM V Diagnosis:      # students:      #mild:       #moderate       #serious       #acute

1.4 Select what you feel is the most appropriate level of clinical certification based on the needs of your students.

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|  | **Level 1** | Counseling and guidance provided as part of the program on an as needed basis and may be provided on-site or by outside referrals. Most students do not have a DSM V diagnosis, and those who do, are “mild.” Any previous in-patient psychiatric hospitalizations have resulted in the discharge recommendation that no further intensive care is necessary. A consulting psychiatrist should be available if needed. Clinical certification is optional. |
|  | **Level 2** | Clinicians are licensed or must be license eligible and are provided for students identified as in need of counseling or therapy. However, if there is only one clinician, that clinician must be fully licensed. Sessions are conducted at least weekly on site and may be group or individual. If there have been previous in-patient psychiatric hospitalizations, the discharge summary recommendation has been for a lower non hospital level of care. A psychiatric consultant or staff member is available for medication or consultation if required. Students with a DSM V diagnosis may be “mild” or “moderate” Since therapy is being offered, clinical certification is required. |
|  | **Level 3** | Therapy is part of the ongoing program and a requirement for ALL of the students in the school. Sessions are conducted and based on the DSM V diagnosis and the need of the client, and may be group and/or individual, and are conducted on site. There may have been previous in-patient psychiatric hospitalizations. All clinical staff is licensed mental health professionals with a minimum of two years experience. Students on medication or those who have had previous hospitalizations meet with the staff psychiatrist or consulting psychiatrist a minimum of bi-monthly. Family therapy is part of the program for all students and is conducted either in person or via Skype or similar electronic means. Students’ DSM V diagnoses modifiers may be “moderate” or “serious.”. Clinical certification is required. |
|  | **Level 4** | Regular ongoing intensive treatment is provided at least daily and as needed. Most of the students have had at least one prior in-patient psychiatric hospitalization. Psychiatric care, including evaluation and medication management is provided at least monthly by the staff psychiatrist. All clinicians are licensed mental health professionals with experience and training of a level necessary to work with this more at risk population. The DSM V modifier for most of the students will be “serious” or “acute.” Clinical certification is required. |

It is assumed that documentation is consistent with the best practice requirements of the profession in which the clinician is licensed, and the state in which the school is located. It is also assumed that the clinician’s experience and education are appropriate for the level for which the school is applying. All such documentation is to be provided.

1.5 Describe the process that is used to determine admission to the therapeutic program and how it is determined if a child is clinically appropriate for the school. The following records should be required. Place an A in the box when the records are required. Where notpresent, please indicate the reason.

* If the student has been hospitalized, or in a prior therapeutic setting (RTC, Wilderness, etc) within the past three years all records must be available..
* Discharge summaries and recommendations from hospitals or similar programs.
* Psychological and psychiatric and other pertinent evaluations.
* IEP if available
* Record of the admission interview.
* Qualifications of the person who conducted the interview.
* Admission interview (required face to face or electronic for Level IV
* Please indicate the reason for any of the above NOT being available.

*Please make your clinical and/or therapeutic staff procedures manual and/or employee manual available to the committee in the supplementary material.*

2.   Procedures

* 1. Describe in detail the specific scheduling of students for therapy.

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| 2.1.1 How many times a week they receive therapy. |  |
| 2.1.2 The lengths of various therapy sessions. |  |
| 2.1.3 Does the program use group therapy, individual therapy, or both. |  |
| 2.1.4 If groups are used, detail the types of groups (process groups, psycho-educational groups, or other configurations) |  |
| 2.1.5 The number of clients in each group. |  |
| 2.1.6 The number of staff in each group |  |
| 2.1.7 The number of times per week that each group meets. |  |

Please make any additional comments you feel necessary.

2.2 Family therapy is a meaningful component of all therapeutic programs. Family therapy will be evaluated based on the following:

* **Level- 1:** Family therapy may be provided as part of the program on an as needed basis and may be provided on site or by outside referrals.
* **Level 2:**  Family therapy is available for all students on an as needed basis and is conducted every 2-4 weeks either on site or via Skype or similar electronic means
* **Level 3:** Family therapy is a regular component of the program, is offered at least weekly and takes place a minimum of monthly for all students and is provided on-site or, if necessary, via Skype or similar electronic means.
* **Level 4:** Family therapy is a required component of the program and takes place at least twice a month or on a greater or lesser schedule as determined by the clinical director. All sessions either take place in person or via Skype or similar electronic means.

2.3 Explain your particular approach to treatment. (EX: psychodynamic, DBT, CBT etc.)

Please describe:

2.3.1 Indicate if treatment team meetings are held on a regular basis and who attend.

If so, detail how often.       Indicate whether or not a psychiatrist is in attendance

2.3.2 Indicate any alternative therapies that are being used.

2.4 Copies of the type of documentation and records created after each group, individual or family session are to be available for committee examination.

2.5 Indicate if there is an emergency 24-hour hotline for students and/or parents.

If there is, describe how it operates and the qualifications of those manning the hotline.

2.6 Describe the system designed to facilitate internal tracking of unusual events in order to monitor and analyze incidents, identify trends, and develop improvement plans to prevent recurrences.

2.7 Explain whether or not the guidelines for ethical conduct of both staff and students are published in a policy manual~~.~~ If they are not in the staff or employee documents, please describe where they are located or describe here.

2.8 If restraints are employed describe who conducts the restraining, how the staff members are trained, records kept of staff trainings, and to whom incidents requiring restraints are reported.

2.9 Describe what situations require restraints or seclusion, and explain how the policy is made clear.

*Please provide a copy of the restraint and seclusion policy in the supplemental file.*

2.10 Documentation: (Please see the attached recommendation for restraint/seclusion documentation.) Incidents of seclusion and/or restraint must be documented on designated forms. Please place an “X” in the boxes below of the following types of information that are included in the documentation. If any of the following are not included, please explain here why they are not included.

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| --- | --- |
|  | The reason for the physical interventions |
|  | The length of the interventions |
|  | The persons notified, the antecedent behaviors |
|  | Alternative interventions attempted and outcomes thereof |
|  | The student’s condition as observed during the 15 minutes checks, and the student’s response to the intervention |

*Include the forms in the appendix.*

2.11 Incidents of solitary confinement or group punishment are to be detailed and the reporting procedures made a part of the supplemental file*.*

* 1. If an after-care support system is available, please report in detail.

*2.13 Transition plans should be detailed and made a part of the supplemental file.*

3.   Personnel

* 1. Describe the lines of communication among administration and staff members in the therapeutic program.

*Include a table of organization.*

* 1. If the following staff selection procedures are followed and documented, place an “X” in the appropriate box below and explain any “No” answers at the end of the chart.

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | YES | NO |
| Complete background checks |  |  |
| Valid transcripts |  |  |
| Have former employers provided recommendations |  |  |
| Have recommendations been vetted |  |  |
| Have certifications been validated |  |  |
| Has former work experience been verified |  |  |
| Has driving record been checked |  |  |
| Has there been a physical exam (drug screen, TB test) |  |  |
| If any answers are NO, please explain below. |  |  |

*Please complete the staff questionnaire in the appendix and indicate the level of educational attainment and qualifications of all staff member (i.e., BS, MA, MSW, PsyD, Ed.D, or PhD degrees.)*

If you employ non-degreed persons as part of the therapeutic staff, explain the qualifications required of those individuals.

3.2.1 Explain the qualifications you require for your non-degreed staff.

3.2..2 Detail the minimum amount of experience required.

* 1. Describe any probationary period that is employed for all therapeutic staff members.

* 1. Describe any mentoring or peer support program that is required by the school.

* 1. Describe the school’s in-service training and staff development programs for all personnel involved in working with children.
     1. Describe in what clinical areas in-service trainings are conducted for clinicians and therapeutic staff.
     2. Describe in-service training conducted by the school for non-certified staff, and whether it is conducted on or off site.
     3. Provide records of staff training.
     4. Explain whether in-service credits are offered for these courses.

3.5.5 Provide the qualifications of all persons involved in training.

3.5.6 Describe how the staff is informed of the latest relevant clinical information.

* 1. Indicate whether there is a psychiatrist on staff or whether there is a consulting psychiatrist

Give the following information about this individual:

* + 1. The number of days and hours a week this person is available
    2. The number of times each child is seen       The number of minutes each child is seen
    3. Does this individual write prescriptions for the students(Yes or No)
    4. Indicate if this person is board certified(Yes or No)
  1. Explain how the clinical staff is evaluated and supervised.

3.8 Give the names, positions and qualifications of those conducting the evaluations and of those who are supervisors.

3.9 Describe the methods of communication that are employed among the therapeutic, academic and the support staff.

Describe the frequency of meetings for both staff and treatment teams.

3.10 Explain the procedures that govern the use of contracted therapists.

3.11 Describe the treatment plans that are written for each student.

(Please attached a sample copy of a treatment plan)

*Please include a sample of the treatment plan in the supplementary file.*

4.   Other Certifications

* 1. Indicate whether or not the program is approved by any mental health or other public body such as JCHO, COA, etc.

***If so, please list and include copies of all certifications and approvals in the appendix.***

* 1. List the federal, state and local laws and regulations that are required to operate this program and approve this facility.

***Show evidence of compliance in the appendix.***

5.   Medical Policies

* 1. Describe, in detail, the school’s medication management policy.
  2. Explain how medication compliance is addressed.

5.2.1 Describe how often and by whom this is addressed.

* 1. Describe, in detail, the procedures employed if a student needs to be hospitalized during the course of the school year.
  2. If there is a policy for the hospitalization of students, it must be included in the clinical policies and procedures manual. If the policy is not in the manual, explain where it is located and provide a copy of the policy in the supplementary materials.
  3. Describe the clinical transition plans that have been developed and implemented for students who are transitioning to alternate levels of care outside of the school.
  4. Describe, in detail, how medical assistance is made readily available on a 24-hour basis

6.   Evaluation

* 1. Describe the procedures and measures used to evaluate the overall clinical program.

6.1.1 List the persons or agencies responsible.

* 1. Explain what measures of client satisfaction are employed.

6.3 Describe the ways in which these procedures and measures evaluated in order to bring about institutional change.

*Please attach summaries of evaluations of the clinical program by students, parents, staff and others in the school community as an appendix to this report.*

* 1. Explain the ways in which the school employs program improvement, strategic or long-range planning to bring about positive change.

6.4.1 Explain how the measurable goals and objectives are employed to bring about therapeutic success.

6.4.2 Explain how and how often these plans are are reviewed.

*Attach a copy of the plan.*

7.   Office Procedures

* 1. Describe the methods for protecting and storing student, staff and all other personnel records.
  2. Describe all methods used to back up files.
  3. Explain who is allowed access to student files and records

7.4 Describe how and in what ways staff members made aware of federal regulations regarding confidentiality of medical records.

* 1. Explain how is it is determined whether all HIPPA regulations are being followed.
  2. Explain who monitors and trains to insure HIPPA compliance.

1. Dormitories and Housing

Boarding school must also meet the criteria described in Section 12.0 of the *NIPSA Accreditation Handbook, 2019-20 below.*

8.1 Describe any housing policies and procedures that are unique to the therapeutic program.

* 1. 8.2 Describe the security policies taken both day and night

12.0 Dormitories And Dormitory Life

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As life in a boarding school is integral to the overall development of the student, the aspects of that life must be evaluated as part of the entire student experience. The school must exhibit that care has been taken to plan for and implement policies that provide for the affective development and safety of the child in his or her relationships with adults and other students. NIPSA only accredits the boarding programs of schools owned and operated by the accredited school. This section would not apply to those who do not provide those services.

12.1 Statement OF Boarding Principles And Practice

12.1.1 Describe how a suitable statement of the school’s boarding principles and practice is available to

parents and staff, is made known to boarders, and is seen to work in practice.

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12.1.2 Rules and procedures governing dormitory life, leaves, privileges and discipline are published so that students, parents and staff know them. Discuss their access to students, parents and staff. *(Include copies in the appendix.)*

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12.2 Admissions Policies

12.2.1 Describe the admissions policies for new boarders and the criteria used to determine suitability.

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12.2.2 Describe the guidance practices for boarders. Are there persons assigned to help in

orientation and counseling?

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12.2.3 Describe the ways in which a boarder can contact an administrative person not immediately associated with the dormitory in case of an issue.

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12. 3 Health And Wellbeing

12.3.1 Describe how physical and mental health issues are addressed within the boarding setting.

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12.3.2 Describe the infirmary or other appropriate accommodation to care for sick or injured students.

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12.3.3 Describe access to medical personnel, if necessary.

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12.3.4 Describe emergency services and hospitalization policies and procedures. Describe the process if and when a critical emergency arises.

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12.3.5 Describe the school’s policies for administering prescribed or OTC drugs.

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12.3.6 Describe how personnel are trained in HIPAA responsibilities.

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12. 4 Contact With Parents And/Or Guardians

12.4.1 Describe the policies about contacting parents or guardians.

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12.4.2 Explain how parents are notified about dormitory conduct, social progress and general

behavior in the non-classroom setting. *(Include copies of reports and policies in the appendix.)*

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12.5 –Accommodations

12.5.1 Describe room and sleeping accommodations and arrangements.

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12.5.2 Explain how studying and leisure time is accommodated during non school hours.

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12.5.3 Describe how the personal needs of students are provided including washing, showering and use of toilets.

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12.5.4 Describe the accommodations for the disabled.

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12.5.5 Describe how various age or gender groups are arranged.

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12.5.6 Describe how students are allowed to personalize their living areas. Describe the policies.

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12.6 – Safety

12.6.1 Describe the policies regarding health and safety for dormitory living.

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12.6.2 The school ensures that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted. Show how this is implemented *by attaching a written risk assessment policy* and discuss how the administration typically responds to its findings.

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12.6.3 Describe any use of surveillance equipment (e.g. cameras) or security patrolling of school buildings or grounds.

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12.7 Fire And Crisis Precautions And Drills

12.7.1 Discuss how fire and crisis drills are conducted in accordance with local fire department

regulations and a *written record of the drills is kept, both for school time and while students are in boarding facilities.*

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12.8 Food Service

12.8.1 Describe the food service arrangements and policies.

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12.8.2 Explain how the needs of students with special dietary considerations are met.

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12.8.3 Explain how water is made available throughout the school at all times

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12.8.4 Describe the measures used to meet the needs of the physically disabled.

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12.8.5 Describe the qualifications of the food service staff.

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12.8.6 Describe how the food service meets local and state requirements.

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12.9 Personal Possessions

12.9.1 Describe the laundry provisions for boarders.

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12.9.2 How is reasonable protection provided for boarders’ personal possessions, money and other valuables?

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12.9.3. Describe the school’s search policies if any

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12.10 Activities And Free Time

12.10.1 Describe the range and choice of activities for boarders outside teaching time, including sufficient and suitably timed free time each day provided? How is this supervised?

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12.10.2 Explain the range and choices of safe indoor and outdoor recreational areas to which students have access.

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12.10.3 What is the policy regarding boarders seeking privacy if they wish?

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12.10.4 Describe how students are provided the opportunity to practice their religion?

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12.10.5 What kinds of social activities are provided or encouraged?

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12.10.6 What are the policies and provisions for field trips?

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12.11 Staffing And Supervision

12.11.1 For all staff members or volunteers employed or volunteering in a position working with boarders provide the following: a job description reflecting their duties, when and what kind of training in boarding have they received, all regular reviews of their boarding practices, and any opportunities for training and continual professional development in boarding that they have received.

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12.11.2 How is the role of spouses, partners and/or other adult members of staff households within boarding houses made clear?

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12.11.3 Explain how the staff supervises boarders outside teaching time. Are they sufficient in number, training and experience for the age, number and needs of boarders, and the locations and activities involved?

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12.11.4 Are boarders at all times under the responsibility of an identified member of staff who is suitably qualified and experienced? Describe.

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12.11.5 How does staff know the whereabouts of boarders (or know how to find their whereabouts) in their charge at all times?

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12.11.6 Describe the policy and procedure if a boarder should go missing.

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| --- |
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12.11.7 Describe the overnight monitoring of students well-being.

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12.11.8 Explain how boarders have the means of contacting a member of staff at night.

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|  |

12.11.9 Describe how background checks on all staff meet state and local requirements.

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12.12 Equal Opportunities

12.12.1 Demonstrate that the school’s equal opportunity policies are extended to the boarding division and how they are explained and enforced.

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|  |

12.13 – Complaints

12.13.1 How are boarders encouraged to make legitimate concerns known to school personnel not associated with the dormitory?

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12.13.2 Describe the school’s policy for recording and responding to complaints.

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12.13.3 Describe the written record of complaints that identifies those complaints relating to boarding, and include action taken by the school as a result of those complaints?

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12.14 Student Leadership

12.14.1 Describe any system that gives specific duties and responsibilities that are appropriate for students, with adequate staff supervision, training and measures to counter possible abuses of the role.

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12.15 Lodgings (Away From School)

12.15.1 Describe the policy and the precautions taken for use by staff and students during extended trips away from school, and how the well-being of student is protected.

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12.16 – Lodgings In Private Homes And Other Non-School Owned Or Controlled Facilities

12.16.1 Describe in detail any lodging arrangements that are not directly under the control of the school proper (i.e. lodging in private homes, faculty homes, etc.

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12.16.2 How have Items 12.1 through 12.15 (above) been implemented in any arrangement made in this manner so as to fully provide for the well being and safety of students.

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|  |

Restraint/Seclusion Documentation Recommendation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Evidence that parents and student were informed of the facility’s restraint policy prior to admission |  |
| Within 24 hours, special documentation was entered in the chart identifying |  |
| Date and time of restraint incident |  |
| Precipitating events prior to restraining |  |
| Interventions employed prior to use of restraints |  |
| Who authorized restraints-name, title, date, time, type of restraint and length of time authorized |  |
| Evidence that restraints were employed as an emergency safety measure and that all non-restraint interventions were exhausted |  |
| Student was evaluated periodically throughout the episode by staff other than the restraining staff |  |
| All appropriate parties were notified as soon as possible: Supervisors, parents, DCF |  |
| Student was evaluated for physical injury during and following the incident |  |
| Incident report prepared within 24 hours and distributed to appropriate parties |  |
| Debriefing was held with administration and staff within 24 hours of incident |  |
| Debriefing was held with administration and staff within 24 hours of incident |  |

ITEMS THAT ARE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE SELF-STUDY

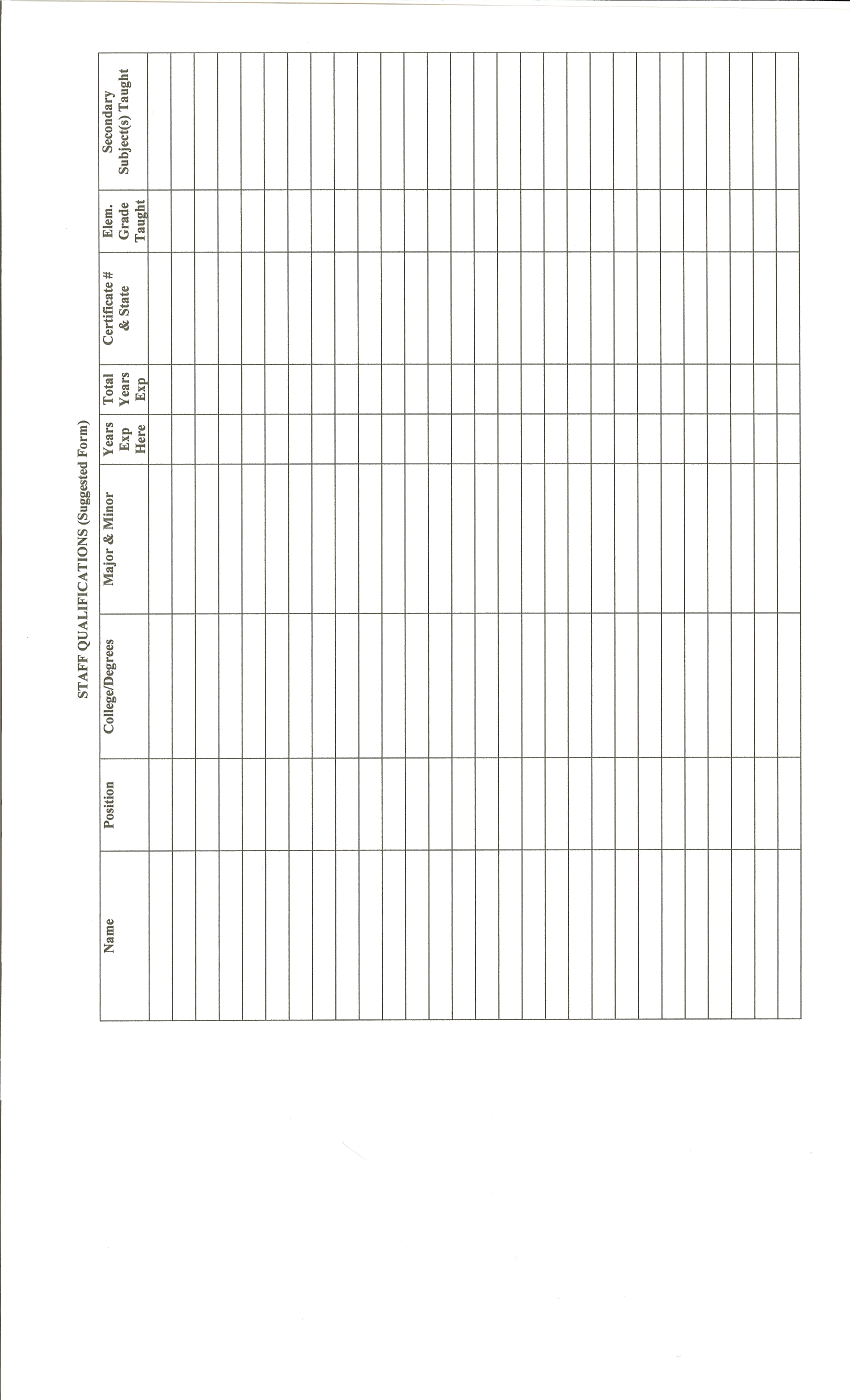
OR IN THE APPENDIX TO THE SELF-STUDY

* School Brochure and/or Catalogue
* School Philosophy
* Materials displaying the school’s anti-discrimination policy
* Copies of report cards and other reports of student progress
* The transmittal form that is used to request records from other schools
* Transcript forms
* Governmental inspections and permits
* Organizational Chart
* The Master Daily Schedule showing both academic and non-academic time blocks
* Campus map showing classrooms, buildings, playgrounds, parking areas, fire extinguishers and exits
* Tuition and fee schedules
* Copies of proof of insurance (liability and property)
* Teacher contracts
* All materials relating to policies and directives that are directed to students.

ITEMS THAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS FILE

(These materials should be collected in a file and be made available for the visiting committee to peruse in the committee workroom.) Several copies of each should be provided. These items will remain in the school at the end of the visit.

* A map showing the area served
* Employee handbook
* Student and Parent handbook(s)
* Policies and Procedures Manual
* Teacher Observation Tool
* Job Descriptions
* Teacher manual
* Staff bulletins
* Student and parent notices
* Newsletters
* Parent meeting agendas
* Staff meeting agendas
* Curriculum Guide (1 copy) – including study outlines and course descriptions
* Scope and Sequence
* Catalogues and other curriculum notices
* Copies of tests used in the testing program
* Drug awareness program
* Written disaster preparedness plan
* School yearbook
* Student surveys and questionnaires
* Parent surveys and questionnaires
* Staff surveys and questionnaires or school climate surveys
* Copy of the early childhood curriculum guide and scope and sequence
* Copies of all licenses required by the jurisdiction in which the school operates
* A description of the parent conference policy for early childhood
* Legal documents that describe and define the corporate status of the school
* Special needs schools provide descriptive materials indicating the unique nature of the school and students
* Special needs schools provide the curriculum and including forms for counseling, recording and reporting.
* A copy of the School Improvement Plan
* Disaster Preparedness and Crisis Management Plan

PART III

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The average size school in the National Independent Private School Association (NIPSA) is 201, and many are very small. The small size is often commensurate with the role or mission of the school. Often, the size of the professional staff may be under 15 teachers and administrators, hardy enough to form a large number of committees or to have the time to do extensive research on test scores and other aspects of student achievement. It is clear that there needs to be a method of creating the School Improvement Plan (SIP) that does not completely divert the attention of the staff from their primary responsibility - teaching children. However, there is much that can be done to develop an SIP that reflects the unique nature of the private school and the important role that it may play in the success of children.

The following pages outline a suggested and preferred method for creating a plan the streamlines the process, yet creates a meaningful plan to guide the growth and development of the school’s academic program. It is suggested that this planning process be integrative to (not separate from) the self-study that is normally required for accreditation and that is the basis for the site visit by a committee of peers.

STEPS IN CREATING THE PLAN – AN OUTLINE

The following are the milestones that should be completed in developing the plan. Each of these will be discussed in the pages that follow.

* Development of a vision and core values
* Creation of the mission statement
* Assignment of tasks
* Analysis of external and internal factors affecting the school
* Identification of strengths and weaknesses of the school
* Identify & prioritize areas needing improvement
* Identify measurable objectives
* Identify strategies for improvement
* Create action plans
* Implement the plans
* Monitor, evaluate & update the components of the plan
* Create the annual report

1. DEVELOPMENT OF A VISION AND THE CORE VALUES OF THE SCHOOL

"There's nothing more demoralizing than a leader who can't clearly articulate why we're doing what we're doing." --James Kouzes and Barry Posner

Most educators have in their minds a vision for what constitutes the effective education of young people. Ideas have developed during their time in the classroom, on the athletic fields and in the role of administrator. Very often these ideas are somewhat vague, more akin to “gut feelings.” When an educator decides to start a school because he or she wants to “do it right”, he or she has probably developed a fairly strong idea about what that school should look like – and feel like. But often they have never put their ideas on to paper. The school improvement process is a chance to do just that.

The vision for a proprietary school is an expression of the passions and expectations of the owner who undertakes the awesome task of building a school from an idea. That idea is the vision, and it is the responsibility of the proprietor to articulate that vision to all the school community. Failure to communicate these beliefs will insure that the vision is never reached.

These are the fundamentals necessary for a vision that excites and motivates people to follow the leader. The vision must:

* Clearly set the organizational direction and purpose;
* Inspire loyalty and caring through the involvement of the entire school community;
* Display and reflect the unique strengths, culture, values, beliefs and direction of the school;
* Inspire enthusiasm, belief, commitment and excitement in all stakeholders;
* Help employees believe that they are part of something bigger than themselves and their daily work;
* Be regularly communicated and shared;
* Challenge people to outdo themselves, to stretch and reach.[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. CREATION OF THE MISSION STATEMENT

The school’s mission statement should be a clear, brief and precise statement of the school's purpose and it should follow from and amplify clearly the vision of the school’s management. It might incorporate socially meaningful and measurable criteria addressing concepts such as the moral and ethical beliefs of the school, the public image, the population to be served, the expected outcomes, and expectations for the future. The mission statement should guide the daily activities of the entire school community and be an integral part of everyone’s motivation. The statement might be broad enough to express a broad view of the school’s mission, or it may be a specific statement of what the school is trying to do for its students and community.

Sample Mission Statements:

The Elephant Sanctuary: "A Natural-Habitat Refuge Where Sick, Old and Needy Elephants Can Once Again Walk The Earth In Peace and Dignity." This is a powerful statement that evokes emotion and instant attachment to the cause of this organization.

Sun Microsystems: "Solve complex network computing problems for governments, enterprises, and service providers."

Ben & Jerry’s Ice Cream: "To make, distribute & sell the finest quality all natural ice cream & euphoric concoctions with a continued commitment to incorporating wholesome, natural ingredients and promoting business practices that respect the Earth and the Environment."

Conclusion  
So, when you are preparing your Mission Statement remember to make it clear and succinct, incorporating socially meaningful and measurable criteria and consider approaching it from a grand scale. As you create your Mission Statement consider including some or all of the following concepts.

* The moral/ethical position of the school
* The desired public image
* A description of the population served
* The educational philosophy
* The geographical area served
* Expectations for the future

1. ASSIGNING TASKS

The best way to create your SIP is to include as many of the school’s faculty and staff as practical, and to include members of the student body and the parental community. However, this is not always possible in every school. The very large school will want to create an efficient way to address the process, and it may not be efficient to include everyone – a limited number of teams may be much more useful. However, efforts should be made to elicit input from all segments of the school population. The small school has a different challenge: there may be too few to create large teams. Individuals may need to take multiple roles in order to prepare the report.

The way the tasks are allocated will most likely depend upon the areas that the school decides to focus upon to bring about student growth in achievement and an improvement in the educational process.

1. ANALYSIS OF EXTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE SCHOOL

Some of the elements that are important to a school cannot be controlled by the school. However it is vital that the school be aware of the forces at work in the environment that may critically affect the school and its future. Here are just a few of the areas that should be investigated:

* The Changing Social Context – for instance, the vanishing middle class, growing population diversity, new economic realities, single parent families, crime
* The Growth of the Technological World – the effect of virtual education, electronic publishing, too much information, the internet, twitter, texting, IPods …
* The Fragile Physical Environment – global warming, climate change, rethinking nature, humans and human nature
* The Economic Environment – Recession, depression, trade deficits, local taxation, federal deficits, job losses.
* The Political Environment – The national curriculum and assessment, accreditation, teacher qualifications, school funding policies, vouchers.

This is just a partial list and there may be more specific issues that exist for your school, but if these issues affect your school and the ability of the school to provide good results in the educational program they should be addressed.

1. IDENTIFICATION OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE SCHOOL

Identifying the school’s strengths and shortcomings is probably the most important exercise in the development of the SIP. Weaknesses are the areas that need improvement; strengths provide the strategies and methods for addressing the weaknesses. Here the school must involve the entire school community, for it is impossible for any one individual or management group to identify those areas where improvement may be necessary.

There are a number of ways that strengths and weaknesses can be identified, but it is important to measure how different groups view the climate of the school. Surveys of these groups attitudes and feelings will often give the school a feeling for those things that must be changed.

1. IDENTIFY & PRIORITIZE AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

Once the school has identified those areas in need of improvement they should be prioritized. The school should develop a scheme to organize the needs into a form that can serve as the destination in the road map for improvement that the school is now creating. This can take many forms and can be organized around various themes, grade levels or subject areas.

1. IDENTIFY MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

Objectives can now be developed that will be the goals of the plan for whatever period the school determines if effective. The important aspect here is to make the objectives measurable. It is of no value to create a goal without a way to determine whether the goal is reached. Typically, when measuring student academic improvement the measure is the results of standardized tests. However, when measuring the effectiveness or a life skills improvement program the results may best be determined by other means: for example, number of detentions, students tardy, absences, etc.

1. IDENTIFY STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

In order to reach the school’s goals it will be necessary to develop strategies for reaching the goals. What are the specific

measures that are to be taken to achieve the objectives?

Use SMART goals to develop your strategies. SMART goals are: S – specific and significant; M - measurable; A - attainable; R - realistic; and T - time-based.

1. CREATE ACTION PLANS

Action plans should include a detailed plan and time frame for each of the objectives that have been established. The action plan should give specific directions to all the participants.

Always keep in mind that the focus of the improvement plan is better student performance and achievement in all areas. While improved facilities, better athletic fields and other improvements have a tangential effect upon student progress, the school improvement plan should concentrate on those improvements that occur in the classroom and in the relationships that are fostered

there. Here are a few examples of goals that have been set by other schools, both public and private, that address student needs:

Academic goals – measurable progress in reading, writing, mathematics, foreign language, etc. The emphasis is on measurable.

Social goals – efforts to increase students’ awareness of the feelings and attitudes of others through programs designed to emphasize mutual understanding.

Organizational goals – efforts to increase attendance, reduce tardiness, etc

Disciplinary goals – programs to reduce incidences of misbehavior and acting out.

Goals to increase teacher effectiveness (an administrative goal that has a direct impact upon students)

Progress toward these goals is capable of being measured and is therefore appropriate for inclusion in any school improvement plan.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| TYPICAL ACTION PLAN MATRIX | | | |
| **I. First Overall Organizational Goal to Provide for Student Achievement** | | | |
| STRATEGIES | INDICATORS | TIME LINE | **PERSONS RESPONSIBLE** |
| A. First objective to accomplish Goal I | Insert the methods that will be used to accomplish, evaluate or assess the objective described. | Insert how long it will take to achieve the objective | **Insert the team or persons responsible to achieve the objective** |
| B Second Objective | As Above | As Above | **As Above** |
| CONTINUE FOR ALL OBJECTIVES FOR GOAL I |  |  |  |
| **II. Insert Goal II** | | | |
| List Objectives for Goal II | **Use the same or similar techniques for all of the subsequent objectives.** | | |
| **Continue this process for all the goals you establish.** | | | |

THE FOLLOW-UP

X. IMPLEMENT THE PLANS

XI. MONITOR, EVALUATE & UPDATE THE COMPONENTS OF THE PLAN

Set a schedule for reviewing the plan and discuss with stakeholders regularly to assess progress.

XII. CREATE THE ANNUAL REPORT

Report progress as part of your annual report to NIPSA.

Other Resources

*A Handbook for Principals, Teacher and School Councils* – A good handbook printed by the Education Improvement Commission - available online at [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/sihande.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/sihande.pdf)

If you Google “school improvement plans” you will find a wealth of information, sample plans and what others have done online.

###### PART IV

THE SCHOOL VISIT

The purpose of the school accreditation visit is to evaluate the school in the light of what the school described in the self-study document; in short, to determine if the “school is doing what it says it is doing.”

Research has shown that the best indicators of a school’s success in doing what they claim are to be found by visiting with the stakeholders - the parents, teachers and students. In addition, the committee will involve itself in evaluating the entire operation of the school and will investigate all necessary Criteria Areas described in the self-study manual.

IMPORTANT: The committee should be provided with an appropriate, private room in which to conduct its business. The room should contain the following:

* All supplementary materials specified in the Evaluative Criteria, Sections 2 and 3.
* Writing implements and legal pads.
* A computer and printer
* Table and chairs to accommodate the committee.
* Access to the www.

The following schedule is meant as a guideline and not a prescription. Depending on numerous factors the actual visit may take two full days or more. These factors are: the number of sites, the student population, and the number of members on the committee. However, every attempt will be made to limit the visit to approximately a day and a half. The actual schedule and duration of the visit will be determined by the site chair and school head.

# TYPICAL VISITING COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| FIRST DAY | Activity | Location |
| 2:00 PM | Visiting committee tours facility | School |
| 3:00 – 5:30 | Meetings with all key personnel | School |
| 5:30 | Committee meets with chair to determine assignments and organize the work for the visit | Conference Room |
| 6:30 – 9:00 | Dinner with key personnel (not required) | To be determined by school |
| SECOND DAY |  |  |
| 7:30 AM | Team arrives at school to observe student drop-off, etc. | School |
| 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM | Committee meets with selected parents | School meeting room |
| 9:30 – 10:00 AM | Committee meets with selected students | School meeting room |
| 10:00 – 10:30 A.M. | Committee meets with selected faculty. | School meeting room |
| 10:30 A.M. – 2:30 P.M. | Committee visits specialty areas and classes, speaks with key personnel, inspects safety measures, and evaluates program. | Classes, library, labs, etc. |
| 2:30 – 3:30 P.M. | Committee observes school closing, after-care, sports, etc. | Various areas |
| 4:00 PM | Committee meets to discuss visit, and write report. Chair clarifies any questions with administration. | Conference room |
| 5:00 P.M. | Visit concludes. Chair meets with school head to discuss findings and recommendation. |  |

In the case of large schools or multiple sites this schedule will be modified by the site chairperson in consultation with the school head.

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

Auditor Confidentiality Agreement

**The National Independent Private Schools Association (NIPSA) has a legal and ethical responsibility to safeguard the privacy of all clients, students and staff and to protect any confidentiality of health and other proprietary information that may be inspected during an accreditation or certification evaluation and site visit. Each auditor has a continuing obligation to protect this information.**

**I hereby agree that I will abide by the following:**

1. I will only access confidential information for which I have a legitimate need to know.
2. I will not in any way disclose, divulge, copy, release, sell, loan, review, alter or destroy any clients’, students’ or staff health information.
3. I will not otherwise misuse or misappropriate confidential information.
4. I will not share information that has been disclosed to me during my evaluation of this school unless I obtain specific permission for the administration of the school.

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

Location of School: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledgement:

I have read, understand, and agree to the Confidentiality Agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Witness Signature Date

Printed Name

PART VI

# SCHOOL SURVEYS

SCHOOLS ARE FREE TO USE ANY SURVEYS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE AND EFFECTIVENESS THAT THEY MAY DESIRE. THREE GROUPS MUST BE SURVEYED: STUDENTS, PARENTS AND FACULTY.

WE HAVE INCLUDED SAMPLE SURVEYS FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS THAT THE SCHOOL IS FREE TO USE. IF YOU WANT TO USE THESE SURVEYS WE WILL SUPPLY A DISK AND THEY CAN BE DOWNLOADED, OR CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT [jaws1139@aol.com](mailto:jaws1139@aol.com) AND ASK FOR “SURVEYS”. WE WILL EMAIL YOU A COPY THAT YOU CAN ADAPT TO YOUR USE.

WE HAVE NOT INCLUDED A TEACHER OR STAFF SURVEY AND SUGGEST THAT SCHOOLS DESIGN A FORM THAT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR THEIR UNIQUE NEEDS.



SAMPLE PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

To the Parent: Please complete this form at you earliest convenience. It is not necessary to sign your name. Return this form to school in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. (Suggestion: Preview the entire questionnaire before beginning.)

Your participation in this school-wide survey is genuinely appreciated. We wish to know your thoughts and ideas so that we can share them with the staff, and ultimately effect changes that will improve our school.

1. How long have you lived in your present community? \_\_\_\_ years.

2. How were you introduced to this school? ❒ Personal recommendation ❒ Telephone directory ❒ Through summer or camp program Driving by the facility Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Please circle your child(ren’s) present grade(s):

PK K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

4. How many of your children, including former enrollees, have attended our school? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. How many years has (have) your child(ren) attended our school, including this year? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you presently have any children enrolled in another school? ❒ Yes ❒ No If yes. Please

a. Indicate what kind of school: ❒ Private ❒ Public ❒ Parochial

b. Circle the grades in which you child(ren) is (are) enrolled:

PK K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1. Approximately how many times have you visited school this year:

a. With an invitation? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ b. Without an invitation \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

8. For what purpose did you visit? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Indicate the sources from which you receive information about the school by rating the following by 1 (most informative) to 5 (least informative.)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| \_\_ | Teachers | \_\_ | Children | \_\_ | Other parents | \_\_ | School bulletins | \_\_ | Newsletters | \_\_ | Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

10. Do you get all the information you want about the school? ⬜ Yes ⬜ No ⬜ Usually

If “No”, what additional information would you like if it could be obtained for you? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. What are some of the things you especially like about the school? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. What are some of the things you would like to see changed? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
     
   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

13. How do you rate you child(ren’s):

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Excellent | Good | Adequate | Inadequate | Comments |
| Textbooks |  |  |  |  |  |
| Workbooks |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other materials |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Your school teaches the following subjects. Please check the statement that best describes your feelings about each of them:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SUBJECT | APPROPRIATENESS | | | EFFECTIVENESS | | |
|  | Very Important to All | Worthwhile, but not for All Children | Not Worthwhile | My Child is Learning | | |
| A great deal | An average amount | Less than I expect |
| Reading (including phonics) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mathematics |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| English (including spelling, writing, literature, etc.) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Penmanship |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Social Studies |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Foreign Language |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Science |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Health Education |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Growth & Development |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Exercise and Dirt |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Drug Awareness |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Physical Education |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Music |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Art |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. What other courses or subjects would you like added to the curriculum for your child(ren)?
2. What evidence of your child(ren’s) progress do you see? (How is it demonstrated? In what form is it?)

⬜ Schoolwork brought home ⬜ Verbal performance ⬜ Writing ⬜ Behavior ⬜ Attitudes ⬜ Reasoning ability ⬜ Independent research ⬜ Initiative ⬜ Effort ⬜ Problem solving ⬜ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

17. Do you have any suggestions that might help us improve the educational program for your children? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

18. Do you think the school is asking too much or too little of students, or do you think that present expectations are about right?

Please check one: ⬜ Too much ⬜ About right ⬜ Too little Comments: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
19. Homework: Do you think there is: ⬜ Too much ⬜ About right ⬜ Too Little Is homework usually relative to the learning program? ⬜ Yes ⬜ No Is it meaningful? ⬜ Yes ⬜ No Is it accomplished without parental assistance? ⬜ Yes ⬜ No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

20. Please comment on your child’s social development and the school’s emphasis in that area: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

21. What do you think about discipline in the school? ⬜ Too severe ⬜ About right ⬜ Too lax Comments:

1. Rate the following pupil progress vehicles in terms of how valuable or informative they are:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | VERY INFORMATIVE | ADEQUATE | OF LIMITED VALUE | NOT VERY HELPFUL |
| Progress Report (Report Card) |  |  |  |  |
| Interim Progress report |  |  |  |  |
| Principal’s List |  |  |  |  |
| In person pupil evaluation |  |  |  |  |
| Teacher phone calls |  |  |  |  |
| Teacher notes and letters |  |  |  |  |

1. How do you believe your child(ren) finds (find) the overall atmosphere and environment at our school?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Always | Usually | Seldom | Comments |
| Conducive to learning |  |  |  |  |
| Friendly |  |  |  |  |
| Supportive |  |  |  |  |
| Challenging |  |  |  |  |
| Stimulating |  |  |  |  |

1. Does the school, through its various communication avenues, inform you adequately – or better – about:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Yes | No |  | Yes | No |
| School philosophy and goals |  |  | Extracurricular events |  |  |
| Building and grounds projects |  |  | Faculty and Staff |  |  |
| School Financing |  |  | Services, such as transportation, food, extended care, etc. |  |  |
| Curricular activities |  |  |

1. Do you have any questions or comments about the subjects listed in question 24?
2. What do you think the purposes of the school should be?
3. How do you rate the following special events?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Did not attend |
| Back-to-school Night |  |  |  |  |  |
| Open House |  |  |  |  |  |
| Musical and Holiday Programs |  |  |  |  |  |
| Classroom Programs |  |  |  |  |  |
| Field Days |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other: |  |  |  |  |  |

Any comments? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you find the following staff members responsive to your child’s and family’s needs?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Yes | No | Comments |
| Classroom teachers |  |  |  |
| Aides |  |  |  |
| Coaches and PE instructors |  |  |  |
| Principal |  |  |  |
| Director |  |  |  |
| Counselors |  |  |  |
| Food Service personnel |  |  |  |
| Nurse |  |  |  |

1. Please express your feelings about office personnel with whom you have had contact:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Courteous, friendly | Helpful | Indifferent | Too busy |
| Receptionist |  |  |  |  |
| Telephone operator |  |  |  |  |
| Business officer |  |  |  |  |
| Admissions personnel |  |  |  |  |
| Attendance officer |  |  |  |  |
| Transportation manager |  |  |  |  |
| Other: |  |  |  |  |

1. How do you rate the physical plant?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Excellent | Good | Fair | Inadequate | Comments |
| Buildings |  |  |  |  |  |
| Playgrounds |  |  |  |  |  |
| Parking |  |  |  |  |  |
| Landscaping |  |  |  |  |  |
| Maintenance |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cleanliness |  |  |  |  |  |

Any suggestions for improvement? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. How would you change the school newsletter coverage of:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | More | Same | Less | Comments and suggestions |
| Classroom activities |  |  |  |  |
| School’s mission, standards |  |  |  |  |
| Study trips |  |  |  |  |
| Parent’s activities |  |  |  |  |
| Students |  |  |  |  |
| Teachers, staff |  |  |  |  |
| Curriculum |  |  |  |  |
| Special events |  |  |  |  |

1. What are your feelings about our annual fund-raiser?
2. What do you feel about the dress policies?

34. Are the school’s library facilities adequate for your child? ⬜ Yes ⬜

Comments and suggestions:

35. Please rate the school’s parking arrangements for:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Comment |
| Daily loading and unloading |  |  |  |
| Random visits |  |  |  |
| Special activities |  |  |  |
| All-school programs |  |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| 36. Other comments and recommendations: |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |



Parent’s Signature (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

# Grades 3-8

Circle your grade in school: 3 4 5 6 7 8

1. How long have you been at this school? \_\_\_\_\_\_

1. What are some of the things you like most about this school?
2. What are some of the things you do not like about this school?
3. What do you think could be done to make the school better?
4. Our school teaches the following subjects. Please put a check in the column that goes with the statement that best describes your feelings about each of them.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SUBJECT | I like this subject | This subject is all right | I don’t like this subject |
|  |  | | |
| Reading ……………………………… |  |  |  |
| Spelling ……………………………… |  |  |  |
| Handwriting …………………………. |  |  |  |
| Creative Writing …………………….. |  |  |  |
| Journal Writing ……………………… |  |  |  |
| Mathematics …………………………. |  |  |  |
| Social Studies/ History/ Geography …. |  |  |  |
| Science ………………………………. |  |  |  |
| Health ……………………………….. |  |  |  |
| Physical Education ………………….. |  |  |  |
| Music ………………………………… |  |  |  |
| Art …………………………………… |  |  |  |
| Foreign Language …………………... |  |  |  |
| Computers …………………………… |  |  |  |
| Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ………… |  |  |  |

1. Check the activities in which you participate:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ⬜ Scouting | ⬜ Drill Team | ⬜ Band |
| ⬜ Chorus | ⬜ Sports | ⬜ Dance |
| ⬜ Gymnastics | ⬜ Arts and Crafts | ⬜ Computers |
| ⬜ Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | |

7. Do you like the activities in which you participate? Yes ⬜ No ⬜

8. What additional after school activities would you like to have?

9. Do you think that your teachers ask you to do too much work during school or too little work, or do you think what they ask is just right? Please check the statement that tells how you feel:

⬜ Too much work ⬜ Too little work ⬜ The amount is just right ⬜ Don’t know

Why do you feel this way?

1. Please check the statement that tells how you feel about homework:

⬜ Too much homework ⬜ Too little homework ⬜ Just about right ⬜ Don’t know

Why do you feel this way?

1. Please check the statement that tells how you feel about discipline here at school:

⬜ Too much discipline ⬜ Just right ⬜ Too easy ⬜ Don’t know

Why do you feel this way?

1. What do you like best about your teachers?
2. What are some of the things you would like your teachers to do for you that they are not doing now?
3. How do you feel about the field trips that you go on?

⬜ They are worthwhile ⬜ They are a waste of time ⬜ Don’t know

Why do you feel this way?

Do you think there should be more field trips? ⬜ Yes ⬜ No

If you answered yes, where would you like to go?

1. How do you feel about the length of recess?

⬜ Just right ⬜ Too short ⬜ Too long ⬜ Don’t know

1. What do you like best about your school principal?
2. What are some of the thing you would like your principal to do that he/she is not doing now?
3. Please indicate how you come to school:

⬜ Parents drive me ⬜ Carpool ⬜ Bus ⬜ Walk ⬜ Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

19. Do you have a computer at home? ⬜ Yes ⬜ No

If yes, what kind? ⬜ Apple/Macintosh ⬜ IBM/IBM Clone ⬜ Other (Type) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Check the statements that tell how you feel about your school. You may check as many statements as you like:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Most lessons are interesting. |
|  | I get enough time to work on my own. |
|  | Most lessons are boring. |
|  | The teachers work hard with all the students, but they go too fast for me. |
|  | The teachers work hard with all the students, but they go too slowly for me. |
|  | I like the special projects we work on in some of our lessons. |
|  | I like the chance to look up more about the things we are studying. |
|  | I like the chance to do extra credit projects. |
|  | Most teachers know which students need help and help each one when he or she need it. |
|  | I like school. |
|  | I like how friendly the teachers are to the students. |
|  | I like to see parents helping around the school. |
|  | I like the spirit and loyalty of the school. |
|  | I like the way the principal and the teachers know each other and try to help us. |
|  | I like the school because there is always someone her to talk to. |
|  | I like the way we elect and work with classroom and school officers (student council, government.) |
|  | I like to work in groups in class. |
|  | I like to work alone at school. |

21. Are you happy with the dress code? ⬜ Yes ⬜ No What would you change?

22. Is there enough time to get individual help from a teacher? ⬜ Yes ⬜ No

1. If you have a problem on the playground do you get help from your teachers?

⬜ Yes ⬜ No

1. Which best describes teachers at this school?

⬜ Caring, supportive ⬜ Some try to help ⬜ Most have little interest ⬜ They don’t care

1. What is your favorite subject?
2. What best describes how you feel about students here at school?

⬜ Really like, I am happy ⬜ Mostly like and happy ⬜ OK ⬜ Do not like

27. Do you participate on a sport team NOT connected to this school? ⬜ Yes ⬜ No

If yes, what kind of sport or team?

28. How many days do you stay after school? ⬜ 1 ⬜ 2 ⬜ 3 ⬜ 4 ⬜ 5

Until what time do you stay? ⬜ 4:00 ⬜ 4:30 ⬜ 5:00 ⬜5:30 ⬜ 6:00

1. If you stay after school, what best describes how you feel about your after school supervisors?

⬜ Most care and try to help ⬜ Some try to help ⬜ Most don’t care ⬜ None care at all

If there is anything you would like to add to this survey, please write it here. Your suggestions are valuable.

###### PART VII

APPEALS PROCESS

The school has the right to refuse the choice of members for the visiting committee that have been assigned to them. However, the school must inform the Accreditation and/or the Executive Director of the disagreement at least two months prior to the scheduled visit. Without discussion or cause, the Accreditation Vice-President will appoint a new member or members.

In the case of a disagreement between the Visiting Committee Report and the school, the school has the right to appeal any recommendations or findings of the committee.

The school should fill out the Notice of Appeal Form and send a copy to the National Office. A copy will be entered in the school’s membership folder and a copy will be sent to the Accreditation Vice-President.

The Accreditation Vice-President will then act as the mediator between the school and the chair of the visiting committee. The Accreditation Vice-President will note the appeal and the resolution of the appeal, and will present this information to the Board of Directors during deliberation of the school’s accreditation.

If the school is not satisfied with the handling of the appeal, the school may schedule a time during the board meeting to present its case to the full board before any accreditation decision is made.

At this point the board has the right to:

* Delay the decision of accreditation until more evidence is gathered;
* Request of the Accreditation Vice-President a review of the Self-Study;
* Arrange for the visit of a mediating person to make a one-day visit to the school to gather evidence, at the school’s expense (said person to be a qualified site chair);
* Reschedule the decision to the next board meeting.

The expectation that all processes will go smoothly for both the school and the visiting committee is the primary hope of the accreditation process. However, when a problem arises, the organization has provided this method of appeal to resolve the situation.

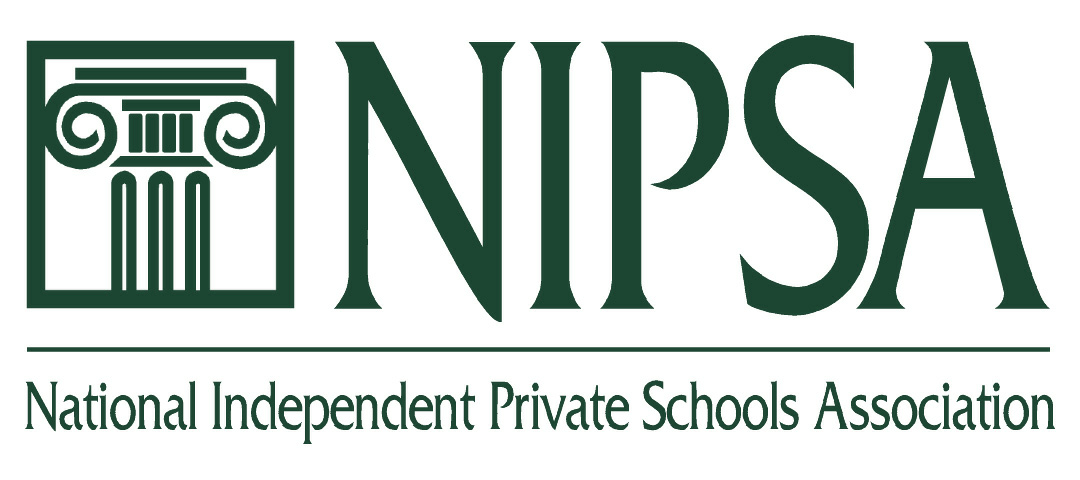
#### *PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH AN INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL COMPLAINT*

All complaints should be in writing to the National Office. When received, the office will notify the school and set an appropriate time for the school to settle the problem with the person or persons making the complaint.

Complaints may be made for many reasons. Sometimes a school does not describe a policy clearly, or has not lived up to that which the person feels was promised or inferred.

If the complaint is settled the school must notify the National Office in writing. If the problem persists the President may assign a member of the Executive Committee to act as a mediator. If this fails, the President will activate the Ethics Committee to become involved in the judgment.

# The person who issues the complaint and the school will be given a copy of this procedure when a complaint is received. The National Office has the responsibility of tracking the procedure and in keeping all parties informed of progress or lack thereof.



# *REQUEST FOR APPEAL*

## NIPSA Schools

*Please print or type:*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
| Current Accreditation Status | | Date | |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | |
| Name of School | | | |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | |
| Street Address | | | |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_ | | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| City | State | | Zip Code |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
| Chief Administrative Officer | | Phone | |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | |
| School Representative, if other than above | | | |
| List Violations of Standards Cited (if any): | | | |
| Basis for Appeal (Continue on back if necessary): | | | |
| Comments: | | | |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
| Signature | | Date | |
| \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* | | | |
| OFFICE USE ONLY | |  | |
| Date Appeal Received: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | |
| Processed By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |

Parent, Student and Patron Complaints

COMPLAINT PROCESS

1. NIPSA does not investigate complaints from parents, employees, or non-member schools as a public service. In the event that any person desires to file a complaint against a member school, NIPSA will advise the complaining party that the complaining party must execute and return an original waiver and release in favor of NIPSA. (Form 1). Any complaints submitted without the required waiver will not be acknowledged.

1. All complaints shall be in writing and received at the National Office. All properly submitted complaints will be logged into a master log, which includes (to the extent provided): (a) name of member school about which the complaint has been received; (b) name of complaining party; (c) date of complaint; (d) date of receipt of complaint; (e) whether the complaint has been investigated; and (f) final resolution of complaint.
2. Upon receipt of the initial complaint, the National Office will (a) acknowledge receipt of the complaint, (b) advise the complaining party that the information received will not be maintained as confidential, (c) advise that NIPSA is transmitting a copy to the member school that is the subject of the complaint; (d) request direct resolution between the parties; and (e) advise that pursuant to NIPSA’s processes, NIPSA does not investigate complaints from parents, employees, or non-member schools as a public service. Therefore, although the complaint may be investigated, NIPSA may not disclose to the complaining party the fact of, status of, or resolution of any investigation. (Form 2).
3. The National Office will review the complaint to determine whether it meets the threshold requirements for investigatory action by NIPSA. Only those complaints that reflect information or contain allegations which, if true, would lead to a loss of accreditation (or a failure of a candidate school to receive accreditation), will be investigated. Matters that will not be investigated include, but are not limited to: matters that are already the subject of ongoing or threatened litigation; matters that are within the jurisdiction of governmental agencies charged with investigating such issues; matters that involve labor or employment disputes; matters that involve the school’s failure to admit, discipline, or expel students; and matters that involve an employee’s or parent’s disagreement with school policy or the school’s application or interpretation of its policies.
4. The National Office will then transmit Form 3 to the member school that is the subject of the complaint, which (a) advises of the receipt of a complaint; (b) encloses a copy of the complaint; (c) encloses a copy of Form 2; (d) encloses a copy of NIPSA’s Complaint Procedure; (e) requests direct resolution between the parties; (f) requires a response in writing within 30 days as to whether the matter has been resolved; and (g) requires a response in writing within 30 days as to any allegations meeting the threshold requirements for investigation by NIPSA.
5. Upon written request, NIPSA may provide member schools with an extension of time to respond to the complaint and Form
6. Once the member school’s response has been received, the National Office will review it to determine whether NIPSA’s accreditation standards have been violated. If the National Office determines that NIPSA’s standards have not been violated, the matter will be closed. A letter will be sent to the member school advising of the closure. (Form 4). The log will be updated and all documentation will be placed in the member school’s file.
7. If the National Office determines that NIPSA’s standards may have been violated and that such violation could lead to a loss of accreditation, the matter will be referred to the President with a recommendation that the President activate the Ethics Committee for review of the matter. In addition, the failure of a member school to respond as requested by NIPSA to allegations contained in the complaint will result in a request that the President activate the Ethics Committee. A copy of the National Office’s request to the President will be sent to the member school (Form 5).
8. The President determines whether to activate the Ethics Committee. If, after review, the President determines that activation of the Ethics Committee is not appropriate because NIPSA’s standards have not been violated, the matter will be closed. A letter will be sent to the member school advising of the closure. (Form 4). The log will be updated and all documentation will be placed in the member school’s file. The log will be updated and all documentation of the investigation and determination will be maintained in the member school’s file.
9. If the President activates the Ethics Committee, the Chair of the Ethics Committee will determine whether NIPSA’s standards have been violated and that such violation could lead to a loss of accreditation. If the Chair determines that the standards have not been violated, the Chair will report such determination to the President, National Office, and member school. (Form 4). No further action will be taken. The log will be updated and all documentation of the investigation and determination will be maintained in the member schools file.
10. If the complaint and response reflects what appears to be violations of NIPSA’s standards, the Chair of the Ethics Committee will call the Ethics Committee into session to review the allegations and findings. The Ethics Committee may request additional information from appropriate persons. The Ethics Committee will then submit its findings and recommendation to the full board at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board makes the final determination regarding action to be regarding the complaint.
11. Possible Board actions include acquittal, warning, written reprimand, probation, or loss of accreditation. Notice of the Board’s determination will be sent to the member school. (Form 6). The log will be updated with the final determination and Board action.
12. If the member school elects to appeal the final Board determination, a Request for Appeal must be submitted to the National Office within 15 days of the date of mailing of Form 6. The Request for Appeal form (and any attached documentation) and all other documentation already received in connection with the complaint will be reviewed by the National Office for a final determination. The member school will be notified of the final determination within 45 days of the date that the Request for Appeal is submitted to the National Office. (Form 7).
13. Should a school choose to drop its accreditation or if the Board elects to revoke accreditation, NIPSA will provide public notice of the change in accreditation (after final determination of any appeal).
14. NIPSA will remove complaints from a member school’s file after expiration of the NIPSA’s three-year records retention period, unless in NIPSA’s sole discretion, NIPSA determines that the records should remain in the school’s file.
15. Member schools may petition for removal of records from its member school file or from the complaint log. Any such petition should include clear reasons why the records should be removed. The member school must execute a waiver and release in favor of NISPA (Form 8) before any such request will be granted.

NIPSA COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

1. NIPSA receives complaint

2. NIPSA notifies complainant of policy and asks for:

1. Complaint in writing
2. Waiver

The Board determines that appeal is justified.

NO FURTHER ACTION

11. The school has the right of appeal upon being notified of board decision.

11. Should a school lose accreditation or resign, NIPSA will make public notice of the decision.

10. If violations have been proven the board can vote to: warn, send letter of reprimand, probation or loss of accreditation.

9. The ethics committee submits findings to the next full board meeting. The board makes a final determination.

8. The chair of the ethics committee will call the ethics committee into session if he or she concurs with the executive committee determination.

7. If it appears to the executive committee that standards have been violated the President will activate the ethics committee.

The Board determines that no standards have been violated.

NO FURTHER ACTION.

If the chair does not feel action to be necessary he or she will report this to the president.

NO FURTHER ACTION

Executive Committee decides that no standards have been violated.

NO FURTHER ACTION

If no standards violations have been noted, school will be notified of closure.

NO FURTHER ACTION

NIPSA does not receive complaint and/or waiver.

NO FURTHER ACTION.

4. NIPSA sends FORM 2 to complainant advising complainant of procedure. National Office will review the complaint and:

3. NIPSA receives complaint in writing and waiver. Information is entered into log.

5. NIPSA sends FORM 3 to the member school to inform the school of the complaint and advise the school of the action to take.

6. School replies to complaint and if it appears that standards may have been violated the executive committee is notified.

PART VIII

APPENDIX I

BYLAWS OF THE

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE I

*Name and Office*

The name of this corporation is the NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION, hereafter referred to as NIPSA. NIPSA is incorporated under the laws of the State of California.

The principal registered office of NIPSA is 10134 SW 78th Ct., Miami, FL 33156. The corporation may also have other offices as it may determine or as the affairs of the corporation may from time to time require. The address of the registered office may be changed from time to time as the Board of Directors may determine.

ARTICLE II

*Purposes, Rationale, and Imperatives*

# Section A: Purpose of NIPSA

The NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION is organized exclusively for educational purposes within the scope of 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 and as amended. Specifically, the purposes of the NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION include:

1. To encourage the academic accreditation and therapeutic certification processes, as characterized by voluntary peer recognition based on accepted and published standards of excellence, as an organizational witness of the credibility of private tax-paying academic schools;
2. To recognize, encourage and improve the quality and diversity of private tax-paying academic schools and/or programs of all categories, including preschool, elementary, secondary, special needs, language, tutorial, and charter, and whether domestic or international, by such actions as the development of educational and research activities, services, and opportunities related to accreditation and/or certification;
3. To engage freely in all lawful activities and efforts, including the solicitation of grants and contributions that may reasonably be intended or expected to promote and advance these goals;
4. To carry on other business related to the foregoing purposes and to have and exercise all the powers conferred by the laws of the State of California Nonprofit Corporation Act;
5. To provide a structure for the improvement of educational programs established to meet the emotional, physical, social and academic needs of children who attend an academic independent private school or independent program.
6. To establish educational and therapeutic standards for such programs and provide an accreditation and certification system to implement and maintain those standards;
7. To provide a clearinghouse for consulting services, conferences, workshops, and news of mutual interest;
8. To establish an educational program to support the goals of the Corporation and to present that program to the public, the media and appropriate governmental bodies;
9. To provide a mentoring relationship for other members wanting to open another private school;
10. To provide mentoring relationships for schools awaiting accreditation;
11. To recognize, encourage, and improve the quality and diversity of schools and programs that serve special populations or offer specialized education and services by such actions as the development of educational and research activities, services, and opportunities related to accreditation and/or certification.

## Section B: Rationale

The NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION is dedicated to the accreditation and certification processes as a viable and responsible means of establishing a witness of program excellence. NIPSA is based on the concept of voluntary peer recognition; that is, the principle that institutions sharing common purposes and distinctions can effectively assist one another in achieving the standards for academic and therapeutic program excellence and in responding to their respective publics and the nation.

## Section C: Accreditation and Certification Imperatives

The NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION recognizes that a valid and responsible accreditation or certification process contains the following elements:

1. *Criteria.* To be an effective and credible witness of academic and professional quality, the standards must be professionally established and published. These standards are to be readily understood by the clientele and sufficient to determine effectiveness based on sound educational and therapeutic practices.
2. *Self-study.* Integral to the accreditation and certification process is the opportunity to engage in a self-study process, whereby effectiveness is assessed based on established standards and guidelines, necessary improvements are made, and results are reported. Accreditation or certification will contain a self-study element and incorporate this element in its review and recognition process.
3. *Site Visit.* On-site evaluation is critical to the objective validation of educational or therapeutic effectiveness. Evaluation is to be conducted by persons with no vested interest, who have been trained and are familiar with the accreditation and/or certification criteria and procedures, and knowledgeable of sound educational practices. A site chair may be the owner of an accredited school or certified program, or may be his or her representative. On a site visit no more than two (2) evaluators will serve from one school. The results of the site visit will serve as a key element in the formal review and recognition process.
4. *Certificates*. Certificates of accreditation and/or certification will be grade or level and location specific.
5. *Re-evaluation.* Reevaluation is essential to insure that accredited or certified members are maintaining the level of quality recognized at their initial accreditation. To do so, the accreditation or certification process will provide for the periodical reevaluation of members. Each change in location, name, owner, program and addition or deletion of grades requires a one-day re-evaluation by one evaluator.
6. *Loss of Accreditation.* Loss of accreditation may occur with:
   1. Failure to pay membership and/or assessment fees;
   2. Failure to file necessary annual reports;
   3. Failure to complete and submit interim report;
   4. Failure to do re-accreditation or re-certification; or
   5. Failure to maintain the criteria as set for membership in NIPSA.

ARTICLE III

### ***Membership and Candidacy***

# Section A: Qualifications

The NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION is comprised of private, tax-paying schools or programs wherever located that are willing to support the purposes, standards, procedures, and other requirements of NIPSA.

Any owner of a tax-paying school or program seeking recognition by NIPSA must make application and provide supportive materials as requested by NIPSA. All prospective schools or programs are required to meet specific criteria and procedural requirements in order to be considered for candidacy and accreditation. The Board of Directors based on the following guidelines will establish these requirements:

1. Shall be any individual or entity operating a tax-paying school or program that meets the educational, emotional, social, psychological or physiological needs of children and young adults;
2. Has legal authority and appropriate approval to operate;
3. Shall operate:
4. a. an academic school consisting of any grades PK through 12 whose educational program is consistent with the criteria set forth for accreditation;
5. b. a school or program that focuses upon the educational, emotional, social, psychological or physiological needs of children and young adults;
6. Is willing to comply with all NIPSA academic criteria and/or therapeutic standards, pay all required fees and expenses, attend required meetings, and provide necessary information to the Board of Directors and official representatives to fulfill the recognition process;
7. Shall agree to abide by and, if admitted, at all times adhere to the goals, articles, rules and regulations of this Corporation;
8. Shall be of good character, dedicated to excellence and the purposes of the Corporation, and meet the qualification and requirements as set forth herein; and
9. Shall comply with all laws applicable to the school’s operation.

Section B: Process for Membership

A school or program owner desiring to make application to NIPSA must send an official application (signed by the chief administrative officer) and any other requested forms, materials, and exhibits to NIPSA.

The Executive Director will notify the Board that a school or program has applied for candidacy; such notification may be by email, surface mail or electronic means. Board members having objections to the candidacy will notify the Executive Director by the date specified in the notification. A simple majority vote of the Executive Committee will be required for candidacy. The Executive Committee will award the school Candidate status.

Section C: Candidacy Requirements

Candidate Schools must:

1. Pay annual dues no later than October 15th or upon acceptance. Candidates granted membership after April 30 must pay one-half of current membership fee;
2. Pay annual assessments as fixed from time to time by the Board of Directors based on the number of sites and number of students;
3. Submit a yearly report to the Executive Committee together with the submission of yearly dues;
4. Obtain accreditation by NIPSA for all of its schools or programs that bear the same name within three years of becoming a candidate;
5. Multi-sited candidate schools must submit a schedule for the ultimate accreditation of all its sites that bear the same name.

Section D: Candidate School and Accredited Member Restrictions

Candidate status alone confers no voting rights in this Corporation.

A Candidate School can only publicize its specific status orally until such time as all of its sites have been accredited. An accredited member that owns and operates multiple schools, programs or sites may not publicize itself as a member of NIPSA in regard to any school, program or site that is not accredited or certified by NIPSA. An accredited or certified member that opens a new site may continue to publicize its accreditation as long as the new site is accredited or certified within one year.

A candidate or accredited member may not publicize, state or imply that any school, program or site is accredited by NIPSA unless the school, program or site is in fact accredited by NIPSA.

Section E: Candidacy and Membership Requirements

Candidates and members must:

1. Pay annual dues no later than October 15th;
2. Pay assessments as fixed from time to time by the Board of Directors based on the number of sites and number of students;
3. Submit a yearly report to the Executive Committee prior to the fall Board of Directors meeting;
4. Maintain accredited status for all of its schools or programs that bear the same name at all times after obtaining initial accreditation or certification;
5. Adhere to the goals, rules and regulations of the Corporation.

Section F: Privileges of Members with Accredited Schools

Only members in good standing who own one or more schools or programs accredited or certified by NIPSA are entitled to vote upon a matter coming before the membership. Each member has one (1) vote at meetings of the Corporation.

Only members in good standing who own one or more schools or programs accredited or certified by NIPSA may serve on the Board of Directors or have a staff member serve on the Board of Directors.

A qualified staff member or other representative may represent a member at all meetings.

#### Section G: Loss of Candidacy or Membership

Failure to comply with candidacy or membership requirements may result in the loss of candidacy or membership

ARTICLE IV

*Board of Directors*

Section A: Responsibilities and Authority

The Board of Directors is the legal governing body of the NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION fulfilling purposes as stated in the Articles of Incorporation and these bylaws and representing the wishes and intent of its membership. The property and affairs of this corporation are directed and supervised by the Board of Directors, that will never consist of fewer that ten (10) nor more than twenty-five (25) members until changed by amendment of the Articles of Incorporation or by a bylaw duly adopted by the members. The Board shall be representative of the geographical areas served by the organization.

The NIPSA Board of Directors is officially entrusted to implement purposes, rationale, and accreditation or certification imperatives of NIPSA as contained in Article II. Further, the Board of Directors is empowered with the legal representation of NIPSA and will be charged with the final responsibility of all business of the corporation. Additional responsibilities of the Board of Directors include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Become the Accrediting and Certification Commission when voting on all accreditations and/or certifications;
2. Evaluate the needs of NIPSA and devise programs and activities to meet them in accordance with established procedures and guidelines; review, approve, implement, and evaluate all ongoing NIPSA programs, personnel, services, and activities and their effectiveness;
3. Serve as the final authority in all decisions related to acceptance, continuance, and removal from membership in NIPSA;
4. Approve financial decisions of NIPSA including the establishment of the fiscal year, approval of the annual budget, review and approval of periodic statements of fiscal operations, and setting of membership fees and other charges;
5. Monitor educational policy and legislation in the United States at the national, federal, state and local levels concerning their impact on private school accreditation;
6. Provide and maintain appropriate liaison with international, national, state and local government and education officials;
7. Establish and approve any other committees not provided for in these Bylaws; establish such duties and powers of these committees in accordance with the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws; select or change the membership of said committees, or discontinue them (committee chairs must be board members);
8. Implement and interpret Bylaws, standards, procedures and policies of NIPSA including any ruling on waivers or exceptions; serve as the final authority on any complaints or appeals filed by NIPSA members;
9. Review and amend the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws;
10. Perform any other duties or responsibilities that may be legally required or that may be appropriate or necessary to the purposes and continued operation of NIPSA.

#### Section B: Qualifications, Election and Term of Office

A Director must either be an owner of a NIPSA-accredited school or program, or an administrative staff member of the accredited school or certified program, and who has been approved by the owner of the school.

The accredited members entitled to vote at the annual meetings shall elect directors. They shall hold office for a term of three years. However, if any annual meeting is not held or directors are not elected at any annual meeting, they may be elected at any special member’s meeting held for the purpose, or they may be elected to fill a vacancy or elected at a special member’s meeting held for that purpose and shall hold office until the expiration of the term for which elected and until a successor has been elected and qualified.

## Section C: Removal of Directors

Should a member withdraw, be removed from NIPSA membership, or cease operations, or should all schools or programs owned or operated by such member lose their accreditation or certification, then any director who is either such a member or who represents such a member on the Board of Directors shall automatically and immediately forfeit the position of Director. Should the Board of Directors determine that a director has missed two or more successive board meetings without acceptable explanation and having been excused by the board, such a member will automatically and immediately forfeit the position of director.

## Section D: Voting

The act of a majority of directors present at a meeting of the Board of Directors, at which a quorum is present, will be the act of NIPSA, unless the act of a greater number is required by law, the Articles of Incorporation, of these Bylaws.

## Section E: Meetings

The Board of Directors is required to meet at least two (2) times per year, one of which must be the annual meeting. The Board of Directors may provide by resolution or bylaw the time and place of its regular meetings.

During the annual meeting, the Board of Directors will conduct any necessary elections, review and approve the annual budget, and conduct any other necessary required business of NIPSA.

All meetings of the Board of Directors are presided over by the President of the Board of Directors. A quorum is required for official business to be transacted.

ARTICLE V

###### Officers

## Section A: Titles and Terms of Office

The following are the Officers of the Board of Directors: President, Vice President for Accreditation – East, Vice President for Accreditation – West, Vice President for Special Needs Schools, Vice President for International Schools, Vice-President for Emerging Programs, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Board of Directors may elect or appoint such other officers, including one or more Vice Presidents of divisions, Assistant Secretaries and Assistant Treasurers. Officers are elected by majority vote of the Board of Directors following its annual meeting or other designated meeting. Only official representatives from current NIPSA accredited schools, programs or corporations may be elected as officers.

Officers serve three-year terms in office and may serve consecutive terms.

## Section B: Removal from Office and Vacancies

An officer may be removed from office by a majority vote of the Board of Directors at a regular or special meeting according to the provisions of Article VII.

In the event that an officer's position becomes vacant, the Board of Directors selects a successor at a regular or special meeting. The elected successor will serve the remainder of the term.

## Section C: President

The President presides at all Board meetings and brings such items for consideration as appropriate and necessary for the successful operation of NIPSA. The President retains voting privileges on the Board of Directors and also serves as legal signatory of NIPSA and representative of the Board of Directors and NIPSA in all required official capacities. The President presides over the Executive Committee and retains voting privileges in the Executive Committee. The President also serves as a non-voting, ex officio member of all commissions, advisories, or committees.

The President shall, in general, supervise all of the business and affairs of the corporation. The President signs any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments that the Board of Directors has authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof expressly designated by the Board of Directors to some other officer or agent of NIPSA.

#### Section D: Vice Presidents

The Vice Presidents of the Board of Directors assist the President in the performance of duties and will have such other responsibilities as may be assigned by the President. In the President’s absence from a board meeting or any other meeting the Board of Directors shall designate a Vice President to conduct the meeting.

The Vice Presidents and Executive Director oversee the accreditation, certification and membership processes for the Board. The duties include:

1. Recommending to the Board the criteria for accreditation or certification of schools and programs in their respective divisions.
2. Notifying schools or programs when the accreditation or certification process should begin;
3. Accepting letters of intent, candidacy applications, and approving eligibility checklists;
4. Assigning site chairs;
5. Overseeing all accreditation and/or certification training;
6. Conducting criteria reviews;
7. Reviewing all site-committee recommendations;
8. Chairing the Board when it meets to vote on accreditation and or certification of schools within a Vice President’s division;
9. Reviewing all candidacy and accreditation and/or certification applications;
10. Periodically updating candidacy and membership materials;
11. Recommending candidacy approval to Board;
12. Communicating with new candidates - writing a letter of acceptance by the board;
13. Providing the Board with necessary information to help in the recruitment of new schools and programs.

## Section F: Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for the oversight of all functions related to the office and may delegate, as appropriate, any duties of the office to the Executive Director or other qualified personnel.

The Secretary keeps and supervises the keeping of the official minutes and records of all Council meetings and activities of NIPSA. The Secretary supervises all correspondence on behalf of the Board of Directors and notification of meeting. The Secretary will have all appropriate decisions, reports, and resolutions placed into the official minutes. The Secretary also consults with the Executive Director regarding management of records and files and related office procedures.

## Section G: Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for the overseeing all functions related to the office and may delegate, as appropriate, any duties of the office to the Executive Director or other qualified personnel. The financial records, checkbook, checking account, and other necessary documents shall reside with the treasurer.

The Treasurer assists in the development of the annual budget. He or she oversees the Executive Director in the maintenance of the official copies of the budget and any revisions. The Treasurer supervises and advises the executive Director in matters related to corporate funds in fulfillment of the Board of Directors Directives. The Treasurer will also be advised by the Executive Director concerning the development and maintenance of financial reports, records, and pertinent files pertaining to NIPSA.

The Treasurer provides the Board with a spreadsheet prior to each board meeting.

###### ARTICLE VI

###### Executive Committee

# Section A: Membership

The President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Board of Directors serve continuously on the Executive Committee by virtue of their elected office and each retains full voting privileges on the Executive Committee.

The Board of Directors may also appoint such other persons as may be appropriate to serve non-voting, ex officio positions on the Executive Committee to any appropriate term of service as may be specified or until removed by the Board of Directors.

## Section B: Responsibility and Authority

The Executive Committee is responsible and accountable to the Board of Directors and represents the Council and its wishes in all business within its charge. The Executive Committee is charged:

To make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding changes to the existing Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws;

To make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding changes to NIPSA accreditation and/or certification standards, policies, and procedures; to make recommendations regarding operating policies and procedures;

To review and make recommendations regarding annual budget preparation and the establishment of fees and charges;

To make recommendations regarding the employment, continuance, and termination of the Executive Director or appropriate personnel;

To represent the Board of Directors when it is not in session and as may be specifically directed by the Board.

## Section C: Limitations

The Executive Committee legally functions on behalf of the Board of Directors when it is not in session except in the following matters:

1. Denial of applications for candidacy;
2. Terminating membership, candidacy, and/or any other recognition or status designated by NIPSA;
3. Changes to the Article of Incorporation or Bylaws; changes or established NIPSA accreditation and/or certification standards, policies, or procedures;
4. Disposition or alienation of property or major assets if NIPSA;
5. Hiring or termination of the Executive Director;
6. Changes in previous decisions of the Board of Directors or specific directives or guidelines established by the Board;
7. Changes or limitations to official representatives duly selected to the Board of Directors; and
8. Any other matters so specified by the Board of Directors or otherwise stated in the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws.
9. A majority of the members of the Executive Committee constitute a quorum for conducting the business of the Committee and the Association.
10. A majority vote of the members present at any meeting of the Executive Committee is required to take action on behalf of the Committee.

## Section D: Meetings

The Executive Committee shall meet at least four (4) times a year, twice prior to the regular meetings of the Board of Directors, twice by conference call, and as additionally required for the necessary operations of NIPSA.

ARTICLE VII

### **Meetings**

##### Section A: Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Accredited and Certified Members and Candidate Schools shall be held each year. The Board of Directors shall set the date. All Accredited, Certified and Candidate Schools must be notified.

# Section B: Quorum

Procedures related to quorums of meetings are as follows:

1. Thirty-three and one-third (33) percent of the total of Accredited and Certified Members in good standing, either attending in person or through a duly authorized and properly issued proxy, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting of the Accredited and Certified Members.
2. The Accredited Members at a duly called or duly held meeting at which a quorum is present may continue to transact business until adjournment, notwithstanding the withdrawal of enough Accredited and Certified Members to leave less than a quorum, if any action taken (other than adjournment) is approved by at least a majority of the Accredited and Certified Members required to constitute a quorum.
3. Unless otherwise stated in these Bylaws, quorum for all regular or special meetings of any official body, committee, or other group established by NIPSA is forty (40) percent of the current membership of said group, except the Board of Directors itself. No official business may be conducted at any meeting at which a quorum is not present except for the adjournment of that meeting.
4. A quorum for all regular and special meetings of the Board of Directors will be forty (40) percent of the Directors.
5. Unless otherwise stated in these Bylaws, a majority of those members present and eligible to vote at a quorum is required to pass motions and rule on official business.
6. In the event of vacancies in any official body, committee, or other group established by NIPSA, the remaining membership of that body, committee or group, although less than a quorum may by majority vote, elect a successor or successors to fill such vacancy for the un-expired term in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws.

#### Section C: Voting

## Only Accredited and Certified Members in good standing are entitled to vote upon any matter properly coming before the membership. Each Accredited and Certified Member shall have only one vote, regardless of the number of independent private schools operated directly or indirectly by the Accredited or Certified Member.

## Voting may be by voice or by ballot. Any election of Directors must be by ballot if demanded by any Accredited or Certified Member before the voting begins.

## A majority vote of the total of Accredited and Certified Members present at any meeting determines outcome.

## Section D: Regular Meetings

# All official bodies, committees, or other groups established by the NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION will conduct such meetings as prescribed by these Bylaws and as necessary to the business of NIPSA. Said body, committee, or other group may provide by resolution the time and place of its meetings.

# The Board of Directors is required to hold at least two (2) regular meetings per year, one of which is to be designated as its annual meeting. Immediately following each annual meeting of members, the Board of Directors shall hold a regular meeting for the purpose of organization, election of officers, and the transaction of other business.

## Section E: Special Meetings

In addition to regular meetings, the presiding officer of any official body, committee, or other group within NIPSA, or the majority of said group, may call a special meetings The person authorized to call special meetings of said group shall fix the time and place of the meeting, and will notify all members (including ex-officio members) by telephone, mail, telegraph, or electronic transmission at least ten (10) business days prior to the date of the meeting. No other business may be conducted at the special meeting other than the business specified in the notice.

Notification may be waived with unanimous consent of the members. Quorum and all other procedures regarding meetings will remain in effect.

Members protesting notification of special meetings must do so at the beginning of the meeting; and should improper notification be determined, the meeting will be immediately adjourned with no additional business conducted.

## Section 4: Official Business without Formal Meetings

At the discretion of the presiding officer of any official body, committee, or other group established by NIPSA, said group may conduct business (including elections) by mail, telephone, facsimile, or other approved electronic media; with the exception of the annual meeting held by the Board of Directors.

The presiding officer of any group may send or transmit, or cause to be sent or transmitted, notification and any appropriate materials to each member (including ex officio members) at his or her currently registered address with NIPSA and including a reasonable date for response. Minutes of all official actions taken by mail, telephone, teleconference, facsimile, or other approved electronic media will be communicated in writing to each member of said group and entered into the official minutes.

### **ARTICLE VIII**

*NIPSA Employees*

## Section A: Executive Director

The Executive Director is to be employed by the Board of Directors, who will specify the duties, salary, and benefits related to the position. The Board of Directors is responsible for retention, compensation, and termination of any Executive Director with necessary input and review by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Director is the chief staff official of NIPSA and is charged with the daily business, representation, and necessary operations of NIPSA. The Executive Director will be a non-voting, ex officio representative on the Board of Directors and all commissions, committees, advisories, or other bodies established by the Board of Directors.

## Section B: Other Staff

NIPSA will retain or employ such other staff, as may be necessary and expedient to its needs and operations. All staff members are to be selected by the Executive Director duly operating under any salary guidelines and employment procedures as established by NIPSA.

The Executive Director is also charged with the supervision, compensation, development and retention/termination of any paid NIPSA staff.

### **ARTICLE IX**

Commissions on Standards and Reviews

## Section A: Membership

The Board of Directors shall serve as the Commission on Standards and Review.

Commission meetings will be a part of each Board of Directors meeting.

The Vice President for each division shall chair the Commission on matters related to that particular division. All other board members, including the President, become voting members of the Commission.

##### Section B: Responsibilities

The commission votes on all matters pertaining to the accreditation or certification, re-accreditation or re-certification, or loss of accreditation or certification of candidate or member schools. It approves all written materials for accreditation or certification, site committee handbooks, training manuals and the standards for accreditation or certification. Votes on these matters may be taken by surface mail, email or electronic transmission.

#### Section C: Meetings

The Commission on Standards and Review will meet at each Board Meeting at least twice a year.

### **ARTICLE X**

### **Financial Consideration**

## Section A: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall be from July 1 through June 30.

## Section B: Income and Assets

The NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHGOOLS ASSOCIATION may receive such income and/or participate in such income-producing activities as may be legal and permissible for a non-profit corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or any other corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law and as may be necessary and expedient for the fulfillment of its purposes as stated in Article II.

Section C: Operating Expenses

Within any fiscal year, total operating expenses of NIPSA will not exceed the total annual dues, gifts, donations, and earnings received for that year without the direct approval of the Board of Directors.

## Section D: Membership Fees and Other Charges

The Board of Directors will approve annually the schedule of dues, assessments, fees, application fees, and other charges, and changes will be published and available upon request. Any changes to approved membership fees and related charges require the direct approval of the Board of Directors.

Section E Disposition of Property and Assets

The Board of Directors, in accordance with the NIPSA Bylaws, acts as legal trustees of any and all real or personal property of the NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION and any property accepted, held, sold, transferred, assigned, or otherwise conveyed by the Board will be so accomplished in the corporate name of the corporation. No real property of the corporation may be sold, leased, mortgaged or otherwise conveyed or alienated without said legal action having been approved by the Board of Directors in accordance with these Bylaws.

Section F: Distribution of Earnings and Compensation

No officer, representative, commissioner, committee member, member association or its representative, or any other private individual may received funds or participate in the financial earnings of the NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION, with the exception of just and reasonable compensation for services rendered and/or expense incurred on behalf of NIPSA as approved by the Board of Directors.

By resolution of the Board of Directors, a fixed sum and expenses of attendance, if any, may be allowed to specified individuals for attendance at each regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors. Further, nothing herein contained shall be construed to preclude any official representative sitting on the Board of Directors from servicing the corporation in any other capacity and receiving compensation therefore.

The Board of Directors establishes and approves the salary and benefits of the Executive Director and may be establish guidelines and directives regarding the compensation of other NIPSA employees.

Section G: Assets of Individuals within NIPSA

The personal or corporate assets of any officer, representative, commissioner, committee member, employee, or any other private individual acting as an agent or representative on behalf of the NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION will not be attached by NIPSA not shall they be touched in any suit that may be filed against the corporation solely by virtue of association or membership in NIPSA; nor will the assets of member associations, their sponsoring agencies (if any), or their constituents be similarly attached.

**APPENDIX II**

**NIPSA Code of Ethics**

1. A school shall clearly state its philosophies, goals and purposes, and all conduct should be consistent with philosophy and goals.
2. Proprietors, administrators, and teachers will fulfill their professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity.
3. School promotional materials and advertisements shall reflect a high regard for accuracy and, accordingly, will regularly be updated.
4. A school's enrollment practices shall be consistent with written policies and procedures and shall not be subject to bargaining and other extraneous considerations. Qualified students shall be admitted without regard to race, color, creed, ethnic background, native origin or any other specific handicaps.
5. A school will make available to parents or guardians of prospective students information concerning financial responsibility to the school, as well as the school's policy regarding refunds.
6. Upon enrollment, student records will be requested from the former schools and then maintained in a professional manner. Upon receipt of a properly signed, written request from another school, records or transcripts which may be helpful in determining qualification for admission will be promptly forwarded. The exception to this would be if all accounts were not paid in full.
7. Confidentiality among schools concerning the school community (students, teachers, parents, etc.) shall be respected.
8. Both parties will respect employment contracts between schools and employees, and no school shall initiate an offer of employment to an employee of another NIPSA member school without that school's approval.
9. A school and its employees will neither solicit the school community nor allow school directories or mailing lists to be used by others for purposes unrelated to the educational program.

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1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)