

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

# SELF-STUDY IDYLLWILD ARTS ACADEMY 2015-2016

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*Report generated Nov 30, 2015 by [accreditation.caisca.org](http://accreditation.caisca.org).*

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# Essentials

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## Confirmation of Adherence to the Statement of Fundamental Membership Requirements and Code of Ethics

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*The opportunity to be accredited by CAIS is predicated upon each school's compliance with all of the provisions of the Statement of Fundamental Membership Requirements and the Code of Ethics, accordingly, each school must attest to compliance in these documents. (Please click on the Baseline Requirement Checklist to review the documents.)*

### Baseline Requirement Checklist

#### Statement of Fundamental Membership Requirements for CAIS Schools

1. The school complies with all provisions of the Statement of Fundamental Membership Requirements for CAIS Schools. [Please click here](#) to review the document.

**Answer:** Yes

2. The school complies with all provisions of the Code of Ethics. [Please click here](#) to review the document.

**Answer:** Yes

# Introduction

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## School Profile

**Assigned Collaborator(s):** *none*

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The school's introduction to its self-study is a narrative profile of the school that contains descriptive and identifying information and basic overview data to provide a sense of the school and its context for the Visiting Committee, the CAIS Boards of Standards, and the WASC Commission. The profile should be specific and documentary rather than aspirational. This introduction should be approximately 750 to 1500 words.

### Questions

1. The following are intended as prompts that the school may integrate into its narrative introduction, although other information that the school deems important can also be included:
  - Summarize the history of the school, its nature and scope, its founding philosophy, and its current mission.
  - Provide the important basic facts of the school (e.g., location, size of campus, number of students and faculty, leadership structure, etc.)
  - Describe the racial, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic mix of the student and faculty populations.
  - Provide information on such considerations as local area demographics and parent occupations, if available.
  - Describe the structure and composition of the school's Board of Trustees.
  - Describe the general financial circumstances of the school.
  - Provide summary information about the faculty.
  - Provide summary information about the alumni/ae.
  - Give examples of any distinctive identifying features of the school.
  - Briefly mention any significant institutional changes that have occurred since the prior accreditation.
  - Add other information that might be useful to help the Visiting Committee understand the school.

### **Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts Academy, located in Idyllwild, California, has a rich, interesting history. It was founded in 1946 for the purpose of "promoting and advancing artistic and cultural development in Southern California and primarily for the advancement of instruction in music and the arts." It began offering classes four years later, in the summer of 1950. At that time the school was known as the Idyllwild School of Music and the Arts, or ISOMATA, and it operated as a summer arts program for students of all ages. In 1963 the school was deeded to the University of Southern California. It operated under the aegis of the university until 1983, when the Academy successfully negotiated the repurchase of the property.

After three years of independent operations, the Arts Academy was established as a residential high school for the arts, with its academic program supplied by the nearby Eliot-Pope Preparatory School. In 1990, Idyllwild Arts Academy opened its own academic program. Since its establishment as a residential high school, enrollment has grown from eighty students to the current three hundred-plus.

Idyllwild Arts Academy is one of only three independent residential high schools for the arts in

the nation. It maintains an appropriately selective admission policy and enrolls students from approximately thirty states and thirty-one countries. Fifty-six percent of the students are international. The thirty-five day students are either native to the town of Idyllwild, or children whose families have relocated to Idyllwild to permit attendance at the school. Nearly sixty percent of Academy students receive some financial aid, totaling over \$5.5 million annually.

Upon entry, a student must declare as a major in one of seven different arts disciplines: creative writing, dance, film and digital media, interdisciplinary arts (InterArts), music, theatre, or visual arts. Throughout the two-semester school year, students study five mornings a week in academic classes. During afternoons, evenings, and weekends, they attend arts classes and rehearsals, work in studios, or practice. All Arts Academy students are expected to enroll in a minimum of four academic courses in addition to the courses required by their major.

Required courses meet University of California minimum admissions standards. Graduation requirements include English (4 years), History/Social Studies (3 years), Foreign Language (2 years), Mathematics (3 years), Science (2 years), and Physical Education (2 years). While required arts courses vary from major to major, many are UC-approved. Additionally, a comprehensive English as a Second Language program gives high-quality instruction to students whose first language is not English so that they, like native speakers, can meet academic requirements for graduation as prescribed by the University of California standards.

Idyllwild Arts does not emphasize standardized tests, but these are offered onsite. Because of the diversity of the school's programs and demographics, Idyllwild Arts does not rank its students. Graduates are represented at more than two hundred and fifty colleges and universities in the United States and abroad. Graduates pursue post-secondary study in many different fields, across the spectrum from liberal arts schools to highly competitive arts conservatories.

A small sampling of Idyllwild Arts Academy's highly accomplished alumni includes journalist Celeste Headlee '87, artist Shepard Fairey '88, Tony-nominated actress Marin Ireland '96, musician and 2012 MacArthur Fellow Claire Chase '96, artist Nate Lowman '97, oboist Liang Wang '98, dancer Neal Beasley '00, actor Neal Bledsoe '01, poet David Shook '04, and musician Casey Abrams '09. We take great pride in having contributed to the success of our alumni in their diverse careers in the arts, business, government, healthcare, and other professions.

Of the forty-seven full-time faculty members, many are housed on campus while others live in the town of Idyllwild. Because of its unique program and commitment to providing instruction based on student needs, the school employs thirty-eight part-time teachers who travel from all over Southern California to teach at Idyllwild Arts.

Fifty-eight of the eighty-three Trustees are elected to the Board for one-year terms and may be reappointed to successive terms; the remaining twenty-five, designated as Governors, are elected to three-year terms. At the annual re-election of Trustees, most choose to remain on the Board, giving the school a wealth of valuable experience. The Board represents many constituencies, including parents, alumni, summer program participants, residents of the town of Idyllwild, and participants in other arts communities. The guiding principle for enlisting Trustees is to guarantee the flourishing of this extraordinary school so that talented, ambitious young people can pursue their dreams, develop their talents, and mature into the next generation of artists.

The school sits on a two-hundred-six-acre rural site where it maintains its own water and sewage systems. Approximately seventy acres are developed. Construction is designed with the intention of complementing and sustaining the magnificence of the surrounding natural environment. This is strikingly true of the donor-financed \$6.35 million William M. Lowman Concert Hall, slated to open during the winter of 2015-2016.

The Academy's facilities and program are funded by competitive tuition and a very generous, although small, donor pool and endowment.

## The Self-Study Process

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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### Questions

1. Please provide a list, including names and titles, of the members of the school's self-study Steering Committee. In addition, given that the school is expected to employ a collaborative approach in generating the self-study, please describe and evaluate the process used by the school in producing the self-study.

#### **Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts Foundation has undergone many changes during the last several years. Following the departure of Idyllwild Arts Academy's founding Head of School and two subsequent searches to replace him as Foundation President, the accreditation process has given our community a chance to work together to look at our evolution and define who we are today. The Foundation community has embraced the process wholeheartedly, with staff, faculty, and Board all taking part in answering the self-study questions.

Creating a steering committee of representational leadership and community-wide subcommittees has laid the foundation for ongoing conversations about our strengths, weaknesses, and goals. Drawing upon the institutional memory distributed among the subcommittees also gave us a chance to educate outliers in the community about key decisions.

We might have received more input from some constituents despite frequent reminders that the invitation to collaborate was always open. Our constituents' other responsibilities make it a challenge to assemble committees that fully represent the community and to get the best out of each committee member.

Working on our strategic plan along with the self-study was very fruitful, since the reflection on our mission, vision, and programs stimulated by the former also enriched the self-study.

In short, we regard the self-study as a success.

[SelfStudyCommittees.pdf](#)

[Timeline.pdf](#)

## Progress Report

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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The progress report provides a vehicle for the school to communicate the progress that it has made since the last accreditation visit with respect to the major recommendations of the Visiting Committee report. The Steering Committee, working with other self-study committees, should conscientiously review the progress made on each major recommendation and prepare this final progress report. If the school received a six-year term of accreditation after the last Visiting Committee came to the school, the progress report in the new self-study may draw upon and reiterate the major points articulated in the three-year progress report, along with information that addresses significant developments that have occurred since that time (e.g., the hiring of a new Head of School, an expansion of the campus, or a

spike in enrollment). Provisional schools undertaking their first CAIS self-study are not required to include a progress report if they are not currently accredited by any other accrediting body, as they have no prior CAIS recommendations to respond to.

#### Questions

The progress report should include a summary of actions taken to address the Visiting Committee's major recommendations only. Each major recommendation should be stated and followed by a narrative description that includes the following:

- Specific evidence and examples of what has taken place since the visit to meet the intent of each major recommendation.
  - An evaluation of the progress made, not only in terms of what has been done, but also with respect to the effectiveness of the change.
  - Identification of work or projects referenced in the major recommendations that the school has not yet fully undertaken or accomplished.
1. The progress report should include a summary of actions taken to address the Visiting Committee's major recommendations only. Each major recommendation should be stated and followed by a narrative description that includes the following:
- Specific evidence and examples of what has taken place since the visit to meet the intent of each major recommendation.
  - An evaluation of the progress made, not only in terms of what has been done, but also with respect to the effectiveness of the change.
  - Identification of work or projects referenced in the major recommendations that the school has not yet fully undertaken or accomplished.

**Answer:**

#### Major Recommendations from committee visit February 28 -March 3, 2010:

*1. That the President/Headmaster, Academic and Art Deans, Department Chairs, and faculty develop a subset of ESLR's (Expected Schoolwide Learning Results) that are tied to the mission: a specific list of objectives/goals for student learning that can be used by each department and/or unit of the school so the school can better assess how successfully it is meeting those objectives/goals in terms of student learning. (Self Study pp. 78; conference with Philosophy/Purpose Committee; conversations with Deans and faculty; CAIS/WASC Criteria I, VIII)*

#### Evidence and Examples of Progress Made:

The ESLR committee met throughout the spring of 2011. They gathered input from faculty and department chairs, crafting a list of ESLR's. After the committee finalized the list, they decided to wait until the new president arrived before soliciting his input and ratifying the document. After a year, at the outset of the 2012-13 school year, the committee presented the ESLR document to the faculty, who ratified it with a vote.

Idyllwild Arts Academy

Expected Schoolwide Learning Results(ESLR)

Idyllwild Arts Academy Graduates are expected to be

Creative Artist/Thinkers who:

- Have a good grasp of the formal, theoretical and conceptual aspects of their discipline.
- Understand the scope and influence of the history of their artistic discipline, especially in its contemporary forms.
- Are able to clearly articulate their creative process.

- Are willing to risk themselves and think outside the box.
- Understand the complementary relationship between Arts and Academics.
- Have mastery over the technical aspects of their discipline.
- Are able to comfortably use the language and vocabulary of their arts and academic disciplines.
- Are critical thinkers who are able to effectively articulate ideas in speech and writing.
- Are intellectually curious and have a life-long love of learning.

Responsible Citizens who:

- Understand the connection between Art and social responsibility.
- Make informed choices, and take responsibility for their actions.
- Are aware of global diversity and respect differences.
- Understand the importance of a solid work ethic.
- Work effectively with others to accomplish specific goals.
- Contribute to making a safe, clean, and caring environment.
- Understand their role not only as students but as teachers of their peers.
- Have an ability to establish a criteria for evaluating art.
- Actively cultivate a sense of aesthetic appreciation in order to become an advocate for the arts.

#### Evaluation of Progress made:

The process of collaboration in the development of the ESLR's was successful and it inspired fruitful conversations about what we do and what our goals are for our students. At this point, we are looking for better ways to evaluate our curriculum based on these results.

After the adoption of the ESLR's in 2013, another faculty committee set about creating a set of Promise Statements that describe the student experience at Idyllwild Arts Academy:

Idyllwild Arts promises:

- A demanding, innovative curriculum which challenges students to realize their creative and intellectual potential, in both arts and academics.
- Mentoring from highly qualified, open-minded artists and educators, who are active professionals in their fields.
- A dynamic, multicultural community in a natural environment, dedicated to inspiring curiosity and creative engagement.
- To foster fulfilled and ethical citizens in a global society.

This process also was undertaken by a committee of faculty led by the Head that developed the promises over the course of a semester. They were ratified by the faculty during the spring semester of 2015.

#### Work not yet undertaken or accomplished:

Although the ESLR's are completed and published in our materials, we've yet to incorporate them into the evaluation of our current curriculum and teaching.

***2. That the Board of Governors, engaging in a community wide process of analysis, develop and adopt a carefully studied strategic and financial (transition) plan covering the next 35 years in order to provide a solid, broadly understood framework and goals to guide the search and hiring of a new leader, and to provide a shared base of objectives for the school during the new leader's***



*first few years. (Self Study 1213 and 44, conferences with President/Headmaster, Chair of the Board, the Governance Committee, and the Deans; CAIS/WASC Criteria II, III, XIII, VA.)*

Special Note: As required by CAIS, Brian Cohen, former President of Idyllwild Arts Foundation (IAF), submitted a response to the visiting committee's second major recommendation, along with supporting documentation on March 14, 2012. This response was both "accepted" and "commended" by the Board of Standards.

Evidence and Examples of progress made since the progress report:

Idyllwild Arts hired a new President for the 2011-12 academic year. The President left the school after one year. IAF entered a period of interim leadership that began in July 2012. The interim leadership was comprised of an internally appointed Executive Director, an internally appointed Head of School, the Chair of the Finance Committee and the Chair of the Board of Governors. The interim leadership performed well and enabled the campus community to proceed carefully and thoughtfully before entering into a new search process for the president. The entire school community, including board, faculty, staff, parents, and students participated in a task force led self-study given the task of determine the best administrative structure for the Foundation. This self-study included school wide participation in a survey designed to capture thoughts on the characteristics sought in a new leader. In addition, the community also participated in a survey designed to identify key short term strategic initiatives which provided a shared base of objectives for the school during the new leader's first few years.

The task force charged with leading the investigation into the institution's needs for a new leader concluded that the foundation would best be served by an externally-focused President, and that the Academy in its operation and vision should be led by another person. The position of Head of School was created, and the person who had assumed the role of Interim Head of School was retained in that position when it was made permanent. During the fall semester of 2013, the board conducted an international search which brought us our new and current President, Pamela Jordan. She began her work July 1st, 2014.

In accordance with the "New Normal" model espoused by NAIS, we have increased enrollment without adding staff; we have tapered historic increases in tuition while reducing financial aid as a percentage of gross revenue; we have steadily increased operating reserves to fund depreciation; we have invested in branding and marketing initiatives to demonstrate our value proposition; we hired consultants to address major gifts procurement and planned giving in Development; and we have explored and implemented innovative new programming in the Academy.

Using benchmarking strategies, we have shifted from expedience to data-driven, future-oriented, informed decision-making. We rely on NBOA as a rich resource for business management support, as well as Cal-ISBOA and NAIS DASL statistical survey results to maintain competitive salaries for faculty, among numerous other business-related priorities. We have achieved financial stabilization initiatives including the establishment of cash reserves; payoff of debt; tight budget control; and a renewal reserve line that has been added to the budget to fund depreciation. We have observed cost saving measures, policies and procedures to ensure capital projects are funded prior to building.

We have received five consecutive "clean" audits with no material weaknesses or any significant deficiencies in our internal controls. Auditors have noted improvement in the overall management of IAF financial systems, recording, and preparation of financial statements. In particular, they noted strong cash flow, favorable change in net assets from operating activities, and excellent accumulated earnings on endowment net assets.

We have achieved financial and operational equilibrium. We have seen successive years without having to recast our operational budget in the fall following approval of the budget by the Board based on projections in May. We have accomplished the first new construction projects

since the completion of Nelson Dining Hall in 2005, including a LEED-certified new Health Center with a 10kW photovoltaic system, two new faculty residences, two new classrooms, and the anticipated completion of the \$6.35M William M. Lowman Concert Hall in December, 2015.

We intend to continue to seek opportunities to conserve, invest capital in renewable energy including solar, develop a long-term facilities renewal plan that includes energy-efficient measures and which offsets expensive repairs. We will continue to integrate all areas of Business Operations to achieve maximum efficiency, both from a logistical and cultural point of view, i.e. seek to inspire a culture of shared values, resources, and responsibility.

In 2015, IAF Business Operations assumed management of the 22nd-Annual Jazz in the Pines festival, which saw a 20% increase in revenue year over year. As a leadership team, we decided to partner with DreamWorks/AwesomenessTV to produce "Arts Academy," a reality television show to market the school and our students. Additionally, we contracted with NPR's "From the Top!" to broadcast live from the new concert hall. We have invested in Hobsons Radius Customer Relations Management software to enhance our enrollment function.

#### Evaluation of Progress Made:

IAF operated in exemplary fashion during the period of interim leadership. Many elements of the school community including board, faculty, and staff were reengaged in the institution's mission and goals with a gratifying energy and unity of purpose.

The process for hiring a new President was inclusive and a positive experience. She has been successful in unifying her staff and leading the institution toward the goal creating "one Idyllwild" where the summer program and Academy work together under the umbrella of the Foundation, instead of our former siloed structure.

The short-term strategic initiatives guided our work during those years and are now to be replaced by a long term strategic plan, now nearing completion.

#### Work not completed or yet to be completed:

We've moved past this work and into a comprehensive long-term strategic planning process.

***3. That the President/Headmaster and the Board of Governors, engaging in a communitywide process of analysis, develop and adopt a narrower, or more clearly prioritized list of proposed capital improvements to focus Capital Campaign solicitation. (Self study pp. 164-165, 180; conference with President/Headmaster; CAIS/WASC Criteria II, IV, XI, XIII)***

#### Evidence and Examples of Progress Made:

During the final year of President Bill Lowman's tenure (late 2011), IAF's Board of Governors reviewed the current status and progress of the Capital Campaign, determined that it was not feasible to complete an \$18M to \$20M capital campaign for the Performing Arts Center, and decided to focus on the Concert Hall. In early 2012, IAF secured the services of Marts and Lundy, a national consulting firm serving nonprofit clients, to assess our campaign to date, as well as its future opportunities and challenges. Following an indepth assessment, the recommendations of Marts and Lundy reinforced the decision to focus on the Concert Hall. A significant matching gift of \$2.5M had been secured towards its completion. The deadline for receipt of the challenge gift, a 1:1 match, was December 31, 2013. The goal was \$7.2M. Once the cost analysis was completed, the goal of the campaign was revised down to 6.35M. After the departure of President Cohen, the goal was set to complete the campaign during the interim period before the arrival of a new President and this was accomplished on December 31, 2013. Ground was broken the fall semester of 2014 and it is anticipated that the hall will be ready for use by January 2016.

#### Evaluation of Progress Made:

The committee believes that they achieved the intent of the recommendation by focusing IAF's capital fundraising on the institution's highest capital need and priority. The Development Office secured active and involved volunteer leadership and has developed and deployed a comprehensive strategy and timeline for success.

In the context of IAF's larger capital needs, we secured funding for faculty housing and those have been constructed. One unit is currently housing a young faculty family and the other residence is housing the Dean of Students' family. Upon successful completion of the Concert Hall Campaign, IAF's Board of Governors will assess its fundraising potential and remaining capital priorities and determine appropriate strategies. These include a new science building, classrooms, and the theater portion of the Idyllwild Performing Arts Center.

Work not completed or yet to be completed:

All accomplished

***4. That the Academic and Art Deans, Department Chairs, and faculty devise, document and implement a comprehensive teacher support and mentoring program for new faculty to ensure that adequate mentoring and training is available for new teachers, especially teachers with little or no previous teaching experience. (Self Study p. 51; conference with Administration, Faculty, and Staff Committee; classroom observations, conversations with Art and Academic Deans, and faculty; CAIS/WASC Criteria VB)***

Evidence and Examples of Progress Made:

A task force met throughout 2011 to study mentoring needs at our school. A survey was taken of recent faculty hires, evaluating the mentorship they received and soliciting feedback for future new faculty mentorship.

Evaluation of Progress Made:

Every new faculty member is now assigned a mentor. The mentor and mentee meet during faculty orientation, both privately and in larger peer groups with all new faculty, mentors, and deans. Based on faculty responses from a survey administered at the end of the 2011-12, positive feedback was received for the new mentorship program. In 2014-15, monthly meetings of new faculty were added. These gatherings were at times primarily social and at other times a forum for shared knowledge and orientation. For this year, 2015-16 we added a welcome committee, tasked with devising ways to welcome our new faculty to the community, both the school and the town, sharing knowledge that will help new people get settled and acclimated to our small town life.

Work yet to be completed or not completed:

Future progress includes redefining the process of assigning mentors. For example, cross-disciplinary relationships might prove useful such as arts matched with academic or vice versa. Also, better follow up and reporting on mentoring relationships and meetings throughout the first year are opportunities for improvement.

**5. That the Director of Parent/Alumni Communication expand ways to increase alumni participation in order to strengthen the bonds to the school. (Self study, p.87, conference with Director of Parent/Alumni; WASC/CAIS Criterion VII)**

Evidence and Examples of Progress Made:

IAF's schedule of alumni reunions is extensive and geographically focused, with at least four reunions planned for the last half of the current fiscal year. The Alumni Tracking Project (funded by an anonymous donor) took place over the course of a year. Alumni giving has increased. A large and vital Facebook community has grown due to the efforts of the Manager of Alumni and Parent relations. Alumni frequently return to campus to perform, teach, and visit. The Arts Enterprise Laboratory (AEL) sponsors an alumni intern every year to come back and teach for the year. Also, AEL sponsors an alumni speaker series within the Life Skills class. An alumni trustee program was created in order to better connect and identify potential leaders and supporters for our future.

Evaluation of Progress Made:

The progress has been significant, but Idyllwild Arts is still challenged by lower than desired levels of alumni participation. It is believed that the growing campus wide culture of philanthropy will inform future alumni, but the challenge is to change negative perceptions held

by some current alumni of IAF's philanthropic needs. By working closely with volunteers from various alumni classes, the Alumni Office hopes to address this with individuals and with alumni groups throughout the national and international alumni base. The creation of the Alumni Trustee position has enabled better board/alumni interaction and will provide a platform for alumni solicitation.

Work currently in process:

In comparison with similar schools, alumni involvement and giving have always been weak at Idyllwild Arts. We believe several factors account for this: our geographic isolation makes visiting and engaging difficult; students attending Idyllwild Arts cannot connect the fundraising messages they hear with what they observe; millennials increasingly distrust institutions and, more and more conceiving of philanthropic activity as ideally carried out at the grassroots level, insist on directing their donations very specifically; and Idyllwild Arts lacks a structure to support alumni engagement, not only by monetary giving but by other means.

We are addressing these issues in four important ways. First, the Alumni Trustee program, introduced a few years ago, aims to develop future alumni leaders and increase involvement; we now have six Alumni Trustees. Second, several key alumni leaders are working with Idyllwild Arts leadership and staff to build the structure for an Alumni Association, whose value will lie in facilitating the alumni involvement with students, projects, career resources, etc., that is a precursor to giving financial support. Third, the Development Office has devised and promoted ways to support the kind of specifically directed giving that has become so popular, including the Alumni Scholarship Fund, whose launch more than doubled our previous single-year record for contributing alums. Fourth, programs such as the Arts Enterprise Laboratory regularly bring alumni to campus for masterclasses, semester-long internships, and more.

# I: Institutional Purpose and Core Values

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## 1. Mission

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*The school has a clearly articulated mission statement, formally adopted by the Board of Trustees, that defines its purpose and core values and informs all major planning and decision-making.*

### Context Statement for Standard

A school's mission statement articulates its purpose and core values. The mission plays an essential role in informing and guiding the school's vision of education, and it brings coherence and context to all aspects of school life. A strong mission statement is a living document that inspires reflection and growth and resonates with constituents in the school community.

### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. The mission statement is a functional document in the life of the school, regularly used as a benchmark in planning and decision-making, thus providing direction and coherence to school operations and growth, as well as a foundation upon which priorities are based.
2. The mission is broadly available and is understood and supported by the constituencies of the school.
3. The mission statement is a force for continuing school improvement.
4. The mission statement is a key component of the school's marketing, admissions, and hiring activities.
5. There is a policy or practice of periodically reviewing the mission statement for currency and relevance, and there is a process for making changes to it. This process occurs minimally once within each accreditation cycle and includes the active involvement of the Board of Trustees.

### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school. .*

1. The school has a written, published mission statement, formally adopted by the governing Board.

**Answer:** Yes

### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. A mission statement is critical to understanding all institutional decision-making with respect to people, program, physical plant, financial resources, community relationships, and other important factors. Accordingly, please provide here the text of the school's mission statement.

**Answer:**

In July 2015 the Board of Governors approved the following mission statement:

"Idyllwild Arts Foundation changes lives through the transformative power of art."

2. Describe the most recent review of the mission statement and explain why it was or was not changed.

**Answer:**

In August 2014 the Idyllwild Arts Foundation hired Connor & Associates to facilitate the institution's strategic planning. The eighteen-month process was to include review of the mission statement, an internal and external assessment, and the drafting of a vision statement and a three-to-five-year strategic plan.

Although Idyllwild Arts Foundation has always had a strong sense of purpose, when strategic planning began it had three distinct mission statements:

The Mission of the Idyllwild Arts Foundation is to promote and advance artistic and cultural development through education in a beautiful, natural environment conducive to positive personal growth.

The Idyllwild Arts Academy provides pre-professional training in the arts and a comprehensive college preparatory curriculum to a diverse student body of gifted young artists from all over the world.

The Idyllwild Arts Summer Program provides arts instruction and experiences of the highest caliber to a diverse student population of all ages and abilities.

The Board of Governors agreed that certain core values grounded all three statements and therefore decided to articulate a single mission statement for the entire Foundation. To guarantee inclusiveness, the Board also decided to seek input from the following constituencies:

Board of Governors

Board of Trustees

Student Leaders

Faculty Leaders

Senior Administrative Leadership Team

Strategic Planning Steering Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee met regularly between September 2014 and the following June, often including student leaders and parents in their deliberations concerning a new mission statement.

In July 2015 the Board of Governors approved the new mission statement.

3. Provide two or three specific examples of how the mission statement played a role in major decision-making or planning since the last self-study.

**Answer:**

The new mission statement has been mentioned during the current school year's opening meetings and stated in our new *Student/Parent Handbook* and *Curriculum Guide* and in all materials distributed to the Board. The Marketing Department incorporates the new statement

into its materials, and senior leadership uses it for guidance in seeking closer alignment between the Academy and the Summer Program.

After finalization of the strategic plan in 2016, review and revision of the plan will be considered in 2019, at which time a review of the new mission statement will ensure its alignment with the Foundation's vision.

4. In considering the alignment of the school's mission statement with the current operations of the school and the compatibility of the components of the mission statement with each other, explain any areas in which there is tension or lack of alignment or compatibility. What efforts are being made to resolve these issues?

**Answer:**

The mission statement adopted in 2015 has allowed closer alignment between the Academy's education programs, the Summer Program's youth offerings, and the Foundation's business operations. Previously, the Foundation had three mission statements, which, despite their congruence, resulted in competing priorities.

It should be emphasized that the tension existing before 2015 was not between the Academy's artistic and academic programs, but between the Summer Program and the Academy. Many people believed the Academy was founded in 1986 to fund the Summer Program, which had existed since shortly after the end of the Second World War. Tensions between the Summer Program staff and the Academy staff led to stretched resources and mixed messaging.

As a result of the collaborative process to develop a new mission statement, however, the entire Foundation has become invested in its single, unified mission. Now the director of the Summer Program works closely with the Admission Office and the Summer Program staff to recruit for the Academy, and a newly structured Marketing Department communicates a single and consistent message on behalf of the Foundation.

5. With respect to the mission, what are the school's areas of greatest strength, and in what areas would the school like to improve?

**Answer:**

The school's areas of greatest strength:

1. Idyllwild Arts Academy attracts students with artistic promise and develops their individual gifts, giving them a solid foundation for further development.
2. A concerted, consistent effort to incorporate the arts into the academic curriculum broadens and deepens the ability of students to process and present knowledge.
3. A supportive environment encourages students to find their own voices and to grow as individuals.
4. Young artists of diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds receive opportunities for intense artistic and academic exploration and probing conversations about their responsibilities as global citizens.

Areas for improvement:

1. Idyllwild Arts Academy must continue to educate all of its community members in cultural sensitivity.
2. The school must continue to seek a balance between its commitment to the arts, its institutional needs, and the growing diversity of its student population.

## II: Teaching and Learning

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### 2. Educational Program

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*Guided by the mission, the school clearly defines its curricular and co-curricular programs and provides coherent documentation of them. The programs are regularly evaluated, updated, and strengthened in order to stay current with relevant educational research, to assure the intended outcomes in student learning, and to prepare students for the next stage of their academic careers.*

#### Context Statement for Standard

The school's educational program—its curricular and co-curricular offerings—clearly reflects and embodies the values and purpose articulated in the mission. The faculty and administration take the lead in shaping the program, and it is designed to deeply engage students in helping them to develop the capacities and acquire the knowledge that will prepare them not only for their future education, but also for constructive and fulfilling lives. A successful educational program is the focus of constant assessment and debate, since the students for whom it is designed, as well as the society in which those students live, continue to pose new questions and challenges for learning environments.

#### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. The faculty and administration actively engage in an ongoing process of curricular and co-curricular reflection, review, and evaluation across grade levels and subject areas to improve student learning.
2. There is clear evidence of ongoing instructional planning.
3. The curriculum has a coherent and discernable structure that supports student learning and guides faculty decision-making.
4. Instructional resources are appropriate to the needs of the educational program.
5. Faculty and academic administrators regularly undertake professional development activities to keep them current in educational research and best practices bearing on academic program content and design.
6. The curricular and co-curricular programs address the cognitive, social-emotional, physical, and creative needs of the students, in accordance with the school's mission.
7. The curriculum is designed to engage, challenge, and support all learners enrolled at the school.
8. The design and evaluation of the curricular program take into account that the school's graduates will grow up and live in a world that requires understanding and leadership to successfully address complex multicultural, global, environmental, and technological realities.

#### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. The school has a written, published, comprehensive curriculum guide.

**Answer:** Yes

2. Secondary school graduation requirements fulfill or exceed the University of California "a through g" entrance requirements.

**Answer:** Yes

3. The school calendar specifies a minimum of 175 school days per year (which may include, but not be limited to, shortened days, in-service days, parent-teacher conference days).



**Answer:** No

**Explanation:**

Strictly counting "school days" is difficult at our school. Working directly from the school calendar, there are somewhere between 160-186+ days. 160 reflects only Monday through Friday obligations. 186 includes Saturdays. While formalized classes for most students do not take place on Saturdays, there are many required obligations on Saturdays. Required musical theatre and dance classes take place on Saturdays as well as required standardized testing. Department requirements for productions, field trips or master class participation are also often required on weekends- both on Saturdays and Sundays.

4. The school securely maintains student performance records (also required for Standard 3).

**Answer:** Yes

Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. Taking into account the future world in which the school anticipates that its students will be living, describe how the curriculum is informed by that vision.

**Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts Academy envisions a world in which artists will rely less on traditional careers both in and outside of the arts. Observation of our alumni indicates that more and more they are creating careers for themselves, taking all they have learned within their own art forms, experiences from other art forms, and their academic education in order to create their careers and professional lives. We believe artists will succeed by creating, managing, and marketing their own careers, and seeking opportunities that would have been unrecognizable to earlier generations. We believe their worlds will be connected to those of people from very different backgrounds, places, and disciplines.

We believe that our training grounded in pre-professional training provides the foundation and discipline to begin that journey. All students must enter our school by auditioning for one of seven disciplines: Creative Writing, Dance, Film and Digital Media, InterArts/Fashion Design, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts. With a schedule that devotes afternoons and some evenings and weekends to this arts training, students have the time to develop their skills in the studio and practice room. The curriculum in each arts department includes study in classroom courses such as Acting, Fiction Workshop, Introduction to Filmmaking, Music Theory, etc., and students also have opportunities to use what they learn in the production of plays, films, exhibitions, publications, and concerts.

Our academic program offers a broad academic curriculum designed to support their artistic goals. Discussion- and project-based classes occur in eighty-minute periods five days per week. Teachers actively work to bring the arts into their classroom. Academic classes meet on weekdays between 8 am and 1 pm. Our divided day offers the opportunity for students of different arts disciplines to work together in the academic classroom. In recent years we have seen more collaboration, both between academic teachers and between academic and arts teachers. We see these kinds of collaboration reflected in the lives of our alumni.

With this structure as our foundation, we also seek ways to enrich our curriculum by teaching entrepreneurial and other "real world" skills, global awareness, activism, and creative uses of technology. This enrichment will supplement but not replace the more traditional conservatory-style training needed to become accomplished artists.

We also expect increasing collaboration between our different arts departments, as well as between academics and the arts.

Examples:

- For 2015-16 our new Creative Technology Program brings the arts and academics together to teach students to use technology to produce art. Its Coordinator is also available to help other faculty import technology into their courses.
- The path of study leading to our new distinction in Global Arts, Action, and Social Entrepreneurship is open to all students. Emphasizing artistic engagement with world cultures and languages and social justice, this sequence of courses and projects is designed for young artists who wish to make a difference both locally and globally. Art's power to address the complexities facing our global society will be highlighted by guest lectures, seminars, and events to which our entire school community is invited.

Idyllwild Arts is currently engaged in comprehensive strategic planning and we have formally revised our mission to one that we think is profoundly relevant to the present world: "Changing lives through the transformative power of art." The mission is new, yet it reflects a conviction which had been gaining momentum on our campus for some time that we do more than teach art for art's sake. Our rigorous dual curriculum of advanced artistic study and college-preparatory academics brings people together to learn to share the uniquely common language of art.

Formerly, the mission of the Academy was to provide pre-professional arts training and college-preparatory academics in an environment conducive to positive personal growth. These ideals remain central to our core at the Academy within the broader mission designed to describe the Idyllwild Arts Foundation as a whole.

2. Describe and evaluate the rationale, process, and outcomes of the school's most recent significant curricular changes. How do these changes relate to the school's mission? To what extent is the curriculum constrained by expectations or demands imposed by the secondary schools or colleges to which the school's students apply for admission?

**Answer:**

We recognize that an advantage to being an independent school is our ability to respond to the needs of the individual student. Our curriculum changes are often driven by individualized student needs and interests, as in the cases that follow.

In 2013-14 the school initiated a series of departmental reviews in which Chairs, Deans, and faculty evaluated curriculum and examined student feedback, student outcomes, and college and career choices. During the first year of these reviews we undertook a study of three departments: Foreign Language, Music, and Moving Pictures.

No studies took place during 2014-15 as we began undertaking strategic planning and this self-study. Program review will continue in the spring of 2016.

Here is a recap of what was learned in those first reviews, along with the resulting changes.

#### World Languages

**Process:** A faculty committee studied the needs for this new department by examining enrollment trends and outcomes and student satisfaction during the time when French and Spanish were housed in our Humanities Department

**Rationale:** The committee found need for comprehensive study of both language and culture and for a turn away from a more restrictive, grammar-based curriculum.

**Outcome:** The department was renamed World Languages, reflecting a desire to implement more culture-centered study of French and Spanish. Although the possibility of offering other languages was considered, the centrality of French and Spanish to the study of art and our proximity to Mexico mark these languages as highly relevant to us. A new department chair was

hired for the 2014-15 school year and her leadership has been successful. This year we have added a new full-time Spanish teacher. We now recommend study of a language for three or four years (not merely the required two) for stronger college applications.

### Film and Digital Media

**Process:** The opportunity to hire a new Chair of Film and Digital Media (formerly Moving Pictures) presented itself in the spring of 2015. This Chair brought a combination of professional filmmaking and film school experience that we had never had on our campus. She and the administration worked together to rename the department Film and Digital Media. These terms, while not descriptive of everything taught by the department, are used by students and parents to search for and identify schools. A revised curriculum was put in place to support the storytelling aspect of narrative film as well as the technical requirements of filmmaking.

**Rationale:** Our proximity to the film industry in Los Angeles gives Idyllwild Arts an opportunity, and even a responsibility, to be better connected to the professional filmmaking world. Our students need the internships, practical filmmaking opportunities, and exposure to guest artists that will help them succeed as professional filmmakers. They also need to make more films that are shorter and inclusive of entirely original material, including music. These can be entered into film festivals to provide additional experience.

**Outcome:** Two months into the new curriculum, faculty have been flexible in assessing the abilities and levels of our students. Their training had previously left some weaknesses unaddressed. Some classes that were planned as semester-long double classes have been scaled back to occupy only a single class period. At the end of the year, we will assess our successes and failures in both curriculum and filmmaking so that we can make any changes needed to move us forward.

### Music

**Process:** A committee consisting of the Music Chair, the Dean of the Arts, and faculty studied the needs for this department by examining enrollment trends and student outcomes and satisfaction. College acceptances and the curricula of other schools (Los Angeles County High School for the Arts, Interlochen Arts Academy, Walnut Hill School for the Arts) were examined.

**Rationale:** The committee's conclusions:

- Our Music Department is culturally diverse, but the classical program is predominantly Asian. Even though this is generally true of music schools today, we can still work to recruit more domestic and non-Asian students.
- We need to recruit the correct instrumental demographic for the department, filling the chamber orchestra, balancing the jazz combos, and keeping the musical diversity in songwriting.
- We need to update course descriptions toward the goals of teaching entrepreneurship in all courses, teaching students to read better, exposing them to performance techniques (stage presence, etc.), and preparing them better for the current musical world.
- We would benefit from greater outside exposure through videos and off-campus concerts and tours.

**Outcome:** The Admissions Office is working to recruit a more diverse student population that includes more domestic students, and is prioritizing hard-to-fill seats (viola, oboe, French horn, and some others). Reading skills are being taught more often in orchestra and piano accompanying workshops. Seminars for performance practice and other entrepreneurial skills have been scheduled beginning in 2014-15.

The school must react to constraints imposed and patterns followed by the institutions of higher learning to which our students apply. Art disciplines typically require an audition as well as the standard application, and audition timelines affect many of our curricular decisions about, e.g., private music lessons, theatrical monologue practice, and major assessments and performances.

We do not schedule music performances for times when we know our seniors will be travelling to auditions, our portfolio course is now offered to Visual Arts juniors because of the early occurrence of National Portfolio day, and we have eliminated Saturday classes for all but a handful of Theatre and Dance students because national standardized test dates make Saturday classes impractical.

3. How does the school monitor and assess the success of its students once they have graduated? What does this information reveal about the school's curriculum, co-curriculum, and the students' experience of the school?

**Answer:**

Through personal encounters, Facebook, and alumni reunions, the school collects anecdotal information about graduates' activities, feeding all of it to our Manager of Alumni and Parents Relations. Naviance and SNAAP (Strategic National Arts Alumni Project) also help track alumni data, while our recently completed comprehensive alumni survey, in which participation was high, will inform our ongoing strategic planning process. The data received from the external image audit, including the alumni survey and other constituent groups such as college admission directors, have only recently been presented to the faculty.

The audit reveals a high level of satisfaction with the school. Alumni say that the school helped them live independently, developed their critical thinking skills, gave them a solid grounding in the foundations of their art forms, and helped them appreciate opinions and cultures different from their own. They believe the school is meeting or exceeding its mission and are proud that they attended. The survey also reveals some areas to look at, most of which we have already been working to improve for several years. These include our academic preparation, college counseling, collaboration, alumni networking, and business survival skills.

4. What would the school point out as the greatest strengths of its overall educational program (both curricular and co-curricular)?

**Answer:**

Our greatest strength is that our educational program encourages breadth and depth in both art and academics, including opportunities for collaboration, which informs not only our students' artistic ambitions, but also their prospects for success in higher education.

Our Theatre majors study acting, stagecraft, theatrical history, movement, and dance. Visual artists study sculpture, photography, painting, ceramics, printmaking, drawing, computer graphics, and more. Musicians study music theory and history and also have time built into their schedules for intense practice of their instruments.

Our students look increasingly for chances to collaborate, which we have been eager to supply. Consider the recent project for which Creative Writing majors produced poetry inspired by the work of a Visual Arts partner. A Composition student then set the poetry to music for voice and piano, which was performed by Music Department faculty.

Our students balance their arts immersion with academic study focused on building critical-thinking skills, in academic courses that demand collaboration with students from many different countries and arts discipline. Academic assignments often include an artistic

component that challenges our students to find imaginative new applications for their critical-thinking skills.

Our arts teachers are working professionals who continue to perform, exhibit, write, and make films, constantly refreshing their theoretical reflections with the kinds of discoveries that can only emerge from creative practice.

5. How effective is the curricular program in terms of the stated mission, and how does the school assess and determine this?

**Answer:**

Our curriculum was designed in response to our old three-part mission, described in Chapter 1. While moving forward the new mission will be the basis for our program, reflection on the former mission statement will continue to give some assistance.

The school tends not to rely on standardized test scores or similar benchmarks to measure success against mission. Instead, we monitor college placements, alumni success, and observational assessment of arts production to ascertain success.

Positive personal growth is hard to quantify, but our students have frequent contact with adults in class and rehearsals, in dorms, and in informal interactions on our residential campus. The adults have ample opportunity to guide the students and observe whether they are making wise decisions. We see many students take interest in helping one another—Prefects in the dorms, American students helping English-language learners in math class, older helping younger during music rehearsals—and faculty actively encourage this.

We are considering the introduction of exit interviews to ask about student satisfaction and to collect data useful for the evaluation of our program.

We recently implemented rotating department reviews in which information about college placements, changing career options, and the students we attract will provide grounds for curriculum assessment. Music, the former Moving Pictures Department, and the French and Spanish components of Humanities have already been reviewed, leading to some significant changes. French and Spanish now fall under the new World Languages Department, while Moving Pictures became Film and Digital Media, reflecting the importance of television and the Internet as well as the universality and marketability of the word "Film."

6. Evaluate the effectiveness of the school's co-curricular programs in light of the school's mission. What evidence did the school use in reaching its conclusions?

**Answer:**

Co-curricular programs are a challenge at Idyllwild Arts Academy. Both arts and academics are full programs in themselves and time is at a premium, especially in certain disciplines such as Dance, whose students have tightly packed schedules. In addition, residential life activities that educate about health and nutrition perform curricular functions.

A dorm staff consisting almost entirely of faculty points to our conviction that teaching does not begin and end at the classroom door, since dorm faculty help students build positive relationships among themselves and with our adults.

In recent years we have strengthened our student Prefect program with a more rigorous selection process and better training. The Prefects are vital in modeling mature behavior and leadership for our other students.

Our students form many clubs with co-curricular functions. Student government teaches leadership and Gender Sexuality Alliance teaches respect and models the valuing of community. The prominence in our community of groups like these serves our entire student population, and not simply their members.

Here are some noteworthy examples of co-curricular programs.

#### Art in Society: Distinction in Global Arts, Action, and Social Entrepreneurship

Art in Society is a faculty-driven program, arising out of a day of visits by prominent guest artists to campus for workshops and a panel discussion called Art's Role in Societal Change. The two-day event was called Art in Society; this became the name for the new program, which leads to the distinction upon graduation. Many of our young artists already explore these ideas, and the new program aligns perfectly with our mission of transforming lives

So far we have well over two hundred students working toward this new distinction. Many will not complete it, but the fact that it has generated so much interest suggests our need for this kind of programming. Other students are participating who have said they do not plan to complete the requirements, but simply to work on those parts of the program that interest them. Art in Society has become a way of grounding our program in the mission, for we believe that the transformative power of art changes the lives not only of those who produce it, but also of those who engage as audience members.

#### National Honor Society

Currently in its ninth year of existence, the IAA chapter of the National Honor Society is very active. Its members apply and are selected in the fall semester of each school year, based on GPA, strength of application, and faculty recommendations. They are active as a community service group both on campus and in town.

#### Arts Enterprise Laboratory

The Arts Enterprise Laboratory (AEL) is in its sixth year of existence. Funded primarily by an outside donor, AEL has three principal components:

1. Student grants: Students are able to write their own grant proposal for an artistic project of their own design. They work with a faculty sponsor to develop ideas, a budget, and a framework for their project. If approved, the faculty sponsor assists the student in bringing their vision to life using the funds granted. Some recent examples of projects include fashion shows with specific themes, plays written and produced by students, stop-motion animation, and public visual art installations.
2. Masterclasses and workshops: These grants allow department chairs to bring in guests for workshops that would not be possible within existing budgets. Recent examples include Alan Paul from The Manhattan Transfer, poet Claudia Rankine, and site-specific installation artist John David Mooney.
3. Alumni involvement: Each year AEL funds a small salary for a graduate to return for one school

year as a teacher. Currently, a graduate who is a graphic storyteller is teaching in the Creative Writing Department. AEL also funds a speaker series as part of the Life Skills class, in which alumni return and speak to the seniors about their real-life experiences after Idyllwild.

#### Center for Creative Technology

Process: Faculty-driven, arising out of an academic/artistic collaboration between Mathematics and Visual Arts which occurred during school years 2013-14 and 2014-15. This computer course, initially an experiment in programming the 3D printer, has grown to include more printers and laser cutters.

Rationale: Desire to provide space and support for both students and teachers who want opportunities for such collaboration.

Outcome: The space housing this program is used by the Computer Programming for Visual Art course, and also by other Visual Art students and Theatrical Design and Production students in their art production.

7. Prioritize and explain the two to five most pressing curricular and/or co-curricular issues that the school needs to address in the near future. If possible, identify strategies that the school might use as it moves ahead with this work.

#### Answer:

Our most pressing issue, both curricular and co-curricular, is scheduling. A dual curriculum makes voracious demands on our students, who need time not only to hone artistic and academic skills, but to reflect, relax, and dream.

We must make hard choices among competing elements of our program. Since the school's founding three decades ago, we have eagerly made one addition after another: to program, to student body size, etc. But full enrollment stretches our resources of money, personnel, and time uncomfortably close to the breaking point. Choices loom to permit us to operate efficiently and at the high level commensurate with what we regard as the importance of what we do. We need to develop a process for looking holistically at the school-wide implications of such decisions.

As pressure builds to train our students thoroughly in their arts disciplines as well as in how to market their artistic skills, while we prepare them for the distinct and intense demands of both college and an increasingly complex world, pressure also builds for frank conversations about what is truly possible and how best to achieve it.

### 3. The Student Learning Experience

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*The school maintains a vigorous and informed focus on the learning of each student. It has policies, expectations, procedures, assessment systems, and student feedback mechanisms that enable it to engage—and maximize the learning potential of—each student.*

#### Context Statement for Standard

Independent schools have historically prided themselves on the individual attention that they are able

to provide for each student, and this traditional commitment underscores the critical importance of making each student's learning experience as positive as possible. To accomplish this, schools need to develop sophisticated understandings of how different students learn, and they need thoughtful assessment systems that yield useful data that can aid teachers and administrators in most effectively shaping the learning environment for students. Only schools that are dedicated and successful in these endeavors will be able to maximize the effectiveness of their carefully crafted educational programs as the students experience them in daily interaction with the faculty.

#### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. The school has a clear published statement that communicates its fundamental beliefs and assumptions about how students best learn, along with an explanation of what those beliefs and assumptions are based upon.
2. The school has developed procedures to help all students understand how they learn and how they can improve their ability to learn.
3. The faculty and administration are attuned to and recognize differences in learning styles, abilities, and approaches among students, including those that may be influenced by such considerations as previous preparation, developed competence, neuropsychological factors, socioeconomic situation, gender, culture, race, and ethnicity.
4. The school has developed a thoughtful, in-depth, and multi-faceted system of student assessment, which compels teachers and administrators to gather and analyze important evidence regarding each student's learning and to implement strategies that will help each student to reach his or her potential.
5. There are established structures and time allotments for teachers to meet at regularly scheduled intervals and review the achievement and engagement of individual students and groups of students.
6. The school has established procedures to regularly inform parents about student progress.
7. There is an age-appropriate system in place for counseling students (and, when necessary, parents) regarding academic and social issues.
8. There are established procedures that the school uses to help students who struggle with learning, and there are resources available (within and beyond the school) to the faculty and administration to assist them in identifying and meeting the learning needs of individual students.
9. The school has a process in place to identify students whom it can no longer serve effectively and to counsel them in a supportive way regarding more suitable schooling options.
10. The school has a structured, ongoing process through which it solicits and analyzes the perspectives of students and alumni/ae about their experience of the school, and it uses the information from this process to strengthen the school and improve learning.
11. The school actively strives to create a daily schedule and an annual calendar that allow for students to be productively challenged and engaged, while avoiding structures and practices that lead to unmanageable student workloads and debilitating stress.
12. Students themselves express a high level of enthusiasm for and engagement with their academic work in particular and their school experience in general.
13. Parents generally observe and report that their children have a high level of interest and engagement in learning at the school.
14. Age-appropriate opportunities are in place for students to provide feedback on their experience of the teaching and learning environment of the school.

#### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. The school securely maintains student performance records (also required for Standard 2).

**Answer:** Yes



## Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. What are the fundamental assumptions or beliefs about how students best learn that guide the school's work? How are those beliefs enacted in the classroom, and how effective are they in promoting student learning?

### **Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts Foundation is committed to the principle that art is about much more than fame and fortune. Our founders, Max and Beatrice Krone, believed that the true power of the creative process lies in its ability to transcend boundaries and deepen understanding between people. By practicing art in socially relevant ways, we can make the world a better place. Art can give voice to people who are under-represented, overcome barriers of race, class, and gender, and advance the cause of finding creative solutions to the world's problems.

Like the postwar world that faced the Krones seven decades ago, the twenty-first century needs artists who are eager to engage many forbidding global challenges. Our students live in a world marked by economic instability, geopolitical conflict, and jarring cultural shifts. Tireless reflection, adaptability, and creativity are needed to process one's identity, solve complex problems, dismantle existing structures of oppression, and realize the mutual humanity of all. Artistic expression increasingly requires a global community, not only as an engine of inspiration, critical insight, and change, but also for collaboration, financial support, and professional endurance beyond Idyllwild Arts.

We believe young people choose our school's specialized education because of their personal commitment to the arts. We believe in what our mission calls the "transformative power of art." Art defines and transforms us and empowers collaboration across all disciplines. Art awakens the creativity inherent in each of us. Art's engagement of all the senses leaves a profound imprint on memory and produces more powerful neurological connections, improved brain function, and stronger problem-solving and critical-thinking skills (*Creating Art Feeds the Brain and Fuels Confidence*, Independent Day School-Corbett Campus).

Idyllwild Arts recognizes the need for a delicate balancing act to promote learning by the whole brain and therefore promote both creativity and analytical skills. A diverse program and our respect for the individuality of the student—and the individuality of the student as artist—guide our attempt to perform this balancing act.

The Idyllwild Arts community concedes the inadequacies of our previous mission and we have worked hard to articulate more clearly our goals for our students. Our ongoing strategic planning process has produced a new mission and will lead to greater clarity in our beliefs.

While their core is unchanged, this greater clarity will guide us with more robust confidence into the future. Completion of the strategic plan is slated for February 2016.

We reject the popular, crippling illusion of a separation between right brain and left brain. We believe students must be actively engaged in analytical thinking to make better art and that making art sharpens their analytical skills. Since each student is an individual, we do not believe that students learn best via standardized methods. Because we aim at much more than helping students succeed in the ACT, SAT, or TOEFL, we do not offer AP courses.

At Idyllwild Arts our challenging curriculum gives students the skills they need to do well on standardized tests, but their learning is not restricted to treading water at the surface where standardized tests live. We believe students are better served by investigating the depths. Urging our faculty to explore and exploit the possibilities inherent in the highly international composition of our student body also contributes to a richer, more vital learning experience.

Our core beliefs animate the community in many ways, most publicly in the lively affirmation at our weekly All School Meeting that each of us shall "Remember who you are and what you stand

for.” Campus discussions encourage students to define who they are as they focus on individual development, but also to define what they stand for as they seek understanding of their places in society. Small class sizes and adaptive, student-driven assignments and timelines promote individual development through personalized learning, as do opportunities provided by special programs such as the Arts Enterprise Laboratory and Art in Society.

An intensive community-wide audit confirmed that we at Idyllwild Arts stand proudly for taking risks and working hard. We believe that trying and failing are crucial to the development of tolerance, independence, and personal growth. Our community works hard to sustain a culture of honesty, safety, and creative exploration that does not tolerate closed-mindedness. We guard a sanctuary for artists, thinkers, and doers whom we challenge to become the best that they can be.

After our last accreditation the community agreed to a set of Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs), designed to guide our discussions of assessment, retention, and community values. Our faculty identified attributes characterizing the ideal Idyllwild Arts graduate. The full document, a supplement to this self-study, lists two major goals of the education we give young people. The ambition to train them as both “creative artist-thinkers” and “responsible citizens” must guide every decision we make about a student’s learning experience.

In addition, a faculty and administrative committee worked last spring to articulate what the school should promise its students as outcomes of their education. We pledge the following:

- Program: a demanding and innovative curriculum, which challenges students to realize their creative and intellectual potential, in both arts and academics.
- Faculty: mentoring from highly-qualified, open-minded artists and educators who are active professionals in their fields.
- Community: a dynamic, multicultural community in a natural environment, dedicated to inspiring curiosity and creative engagement.
- World: to foster fulfilled and ethical citizens in a global society.

In short, we promise intensive and individually tailored artistic training that is fully alive to the context of the larger community and world.

Idyllwild Arts makes these promises to talented, passionate young people whom we invite into an inclusive environment where the individual differences among our student body, faculty, staff, board, and surrounding community are understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as sources of strength for all of us.

2. How do (a) the school calendar, (b) the school schedule, (c) class size, and (d) student-teacher ratio reflect the values that the school holds, and how do they impact the student learning experience?

**Answer:**

In designing a program that offers each student full and rigorous arts and academic schedules, achieving a dynamic balance must always be foremost in our minds. We set high expectations for our students, so time is an extremely valuable commodity.

Our focus on individuality and hands-on application of class materials clearly supports the core beliefs of the Idyllwild Arts education. We must balance on-campus experiences with those that can only take place off-campus, and we do not see off-campus masterclasses or attendance of performances as extracurricular enrichment, but as central to our program. Thus, we constantly seek space in the school calendar and daily schedule to accommodate these types of learning experiences.

Since our last self-study, we have eliminated Saturday classes to allow for bigger blocks of time for off-campus or immersive learning experiences, and also to preserve dedicated time for more intensive study of course content. We have also created an Intermester during the first week after Winter Break to permit time for additional enrichment programming.

Also new this year is mandatory student attendance at a minimum number of arts performances and exhibits. While we have yet to see the full impact of this new requirement on student

scheduling, we anticipate substantial benefits in the strengthening of community and in teaching students the importance of supporting each other.

Recently, the school has also focused on residential life and on the integration of non-boarding day students into our program. As a boarding school, we had in the past given too little attention to the day student's experience, but we have seen a need for change as our number of day students has grown, partly due to rising enrollment by the children of faculty and staff.

As our school has grown we have also seen a demographic shift in our student population, forcing recognition that our curriculum must place greater emphasis on life skills and on transitioning into and out of boarding school life. We have therefore joined the work of the life skills curriculum with our expanded, four-year college counseling curriculum. These programs now use a morning block so that they can supply additional content.

We have introduced a formal study hall for freshmen and sophomores to give them more structured time during their free academic periods. This past fall we also altered our academic block schedule, which no longer convenes all six academic periods on Monday for forty-five minutes each. The eighty-minute block model now obtains every weekday to permit more focused academic time and to enhance student learning and retention.

Though our small class sizes remain competitive, the student body has grown since our last accreditation, so class sizes have grown somewhat. (Enrollment in 2009 was two hundred and sixty-five, compared to three hundred and twelve at the start of the current school year.) The data do not suggest that growth has caused student performance to decline.

The creation of a Retention Committee has helped us identify and address student concerns.

Working to isolate areas of student and parent dissatisfaction, the committee has identified scheduling as a key issue. Neither students nor parents have objected to homework loads, but they are worried by the amount of time demanded by our many events. The leading concern of parents is the number of hours of concentrated study.

3. If a team of campus anthropologists were to systematically visit all of the classrooms, labs, studios, athletic fields, and other learning spaces at the school during a normal class day, what typical kinds of learning activities would they observe the students undertaking? Which of these learning activities would be most common or dominant? To what extent would the students regularly appear to be excited or engaged by their learning? In what ways would these activities be reflective of the school's mission and assumptions or beliefs about learning?

**Answer:**

An anthropologist who visited the Idyllwild Arts campus would observe a wide range of activities. Our teachers are committed to hands-on activities, practical applications, group work, and participatory learning, and are encouraged to develop collaborative activities that involve both academics and the arts.

Faculty often discuss the cultural diversity of the student body and its effects on learning. Our academic and arts teachers strive to capitalize on this diversity by creating space within discussions and assignments for students to share their personal experiences.

Inherent to arts education is the need to involve all the senses in collaborative exchange, hence our faculty must have recourse to diverse teaching methods. For example, multimedia teaching methods are popular with our faculty.

We also take pride in the fact that a visiting anthropologist might find a humanities teacher talking to a science class about the poetry of biology, or a visual arts teacher instructing students in creative computer programming. These collaborations and crossovers support our commitment to creative, innovative education.

Although we monitor student engagement partly through grades, we also observe high rates of attendance at classes and events and a pervasive positive attitude among our students.

Furthermore, we watch to make sure that they are continually devising new projects and reaching out for additional experiences and supplemental learning, such as the Distinction in Global Arts, Action, and Social Entrepreneurship that our new Art in Society program offers.

4. Given the importance of evaluating the school's practices in educational assessment: Describe the discussions occurring in the school about the nature of effective assessment. How have these discussions informed assessment practices across the grades and/or deepened teachers' understanding of assessment?

**Answer:**

Assessment is currently under serious discussion at Idyllwild Arts. How do we define a successful Idyllwild Arts student? How do we define a successful artist? How do we measure the success of our graduates and the quality of the education we give them? Do we consider only artistic success, or success in other aspects of their lives? This conversation informs our strategic planning, but also proceeds at a lively pace elsewhere in the community, from departmental meetings all the way up through the administrative leadership.

We are examining methods—in some cases suggested by other schools—for eliciting more informative faculty commentary on student progress, for assessing their art (possibly in the absence of grades), for assessing in a consistent way across all departments, and for the valuation of standardized assessments. We are also asking if using distinct grading practices for arts and academics disrupts the holistic approach that we seek for our curriculum.

Our new mission requires a move away from solely pre-professional arts training toward educating young people to use creative learning in all areas of life. As we undertake this move, we shall continue to use many different approaches to assessment with the intention of showing sensitivity to all learning styles. To assess their students, our teachers may resort to paper assignments, written and oral examinations, class participation, performances, juried reviews, and portfolio review and development.

Our teachers are tasked with determining whether a student has acquired a specific set of knowledge and skills. Because we expect students to demonstrate clear improvement from semester to semester and year to year, we keep meticulous cumulative records of student performance. These include detailed progress reports, as well as results on standardized tests administered in accordance with the CAIS Board of Standards.

Formal assessment is easier in academic classrooms than in arts studios. While some arts teachers use rubrics and other formal tools of assessment, there are no uniform standards. At present, student work is graded subjectively by individual teachers, but we look forward to finding external, unbiased methods to gauge artistic progress. Examples of such neutral assessment include the American Ballet Theatre standards for dancers and the use of outside jurors for recitals, mock auditions, and portfolio reviews. Greater application of external gauges to our students' creative work will strengthen their college applications in an economic climate that has made institutions of higher learning increasingly reluctant to invest in arts education.

For assessment over longer periods of time, we rely heavily on personal testimony by our graduates as well as anecdotal information about their achievements. Going forward, we shall consider more formal methods of assessment.

In recent years we have worked hard to encourage frequent and consistent faculty narrative responses in our Edline system to keep students and their parents informed. Since identifying this as a weakness in our learning process, we have worked conscientiously to improve.

We wish to find more ways to integrate our ESLRs into a holistic evaluation process that measures student achievement in every area where we strive to educate young people: the arts, academics,

personal growth, and growth as global citizens. We may involve the ESLRs in an annual self-evaluation by each student to be completed with help from his or her Advisor.

5. What specific kinds of evidence have been most useful in assessing engagement and learning?

**Answer:**

See answer 4 above.

6. How does the school determine the quality of students' engagement and their growth as learners, particularly given the school's mission and the objectives of the educational program?

**Answer:**

See answer 4 above.

7. What does the school do to help students understand how they learn, to capitalize on learning strengths and talents, and to address their learning needs and challenges?

**Answer:**

We consider the student's individual needs from the admission application process on. After a committee of faculty and administrative staff had evaluated the enrollment process, we implemented several recommendations, including recognition of the responsibility, supported by both the Dean of Academics and the Director of Enrollment Management, to identify clearly the resources and accommodations available to support learning challenges. In the past we enrolled some students with challenges that we could not accommodate, but we have recently made great strides in our ability to identify mission-appropriate applicants.

We have invested in a full-time Resource teacher who is trained in learning differences and available to students throughout the morning's academic class periods. We assign every LD student to a class period in the Resource Center to work with this specialist on both specific assignments and general study skills.

Additionally, "X-block" is a protected time during the school day, reserved for academic teachers to require students needing extra help to report to them for individual attention.

Students can also seek confidential support from our Health Center Counseling team. Though the Counselors do not support work on specific assignments, they address issues of time management and organization which are often of special concern to boarding school students.

8. Explain how technology and library resources are used to enhance teaching and learning. What commitments or objectives guide decision-making about the use of technology? How does the school evaluate its use of technology and gauge its impact on student learning?

**Answer:**

Our technology and library resources strongly support students and teachers. The library is more than adequate for basic library functions and serves also as a specialized arts high school library. It houses an extensive collection of arts-related books as well as academic and fictional works, plus thousands of LPs, music scores, and DVDs. The library subscribes to eleven different databases through EBSCO, providing access to a wealth of information for both academic and arts classes. Feedback about materials from faculty and students is a high priority for the library

staff, which does its best to fill all needs and wants as the budget allows.

Feedback from faculty and noticeable competition for the computer lab have motivated purchase of two sets of Chromebooks, housed in the library and available for classroom use. This multiplication of the number of usable computers has given teachers more freedom to maximize effective class time.

The current school year has seen the launch of a new initiative called the Creative Technology Program with a dedicated Director of Creative Technology. What started as a collaboration between our Mathematics Chair and our Visual Arts Chair on a Computer Design for the Arts course has expanded into a program that encourages interdisciplinary artwork and collaboration among all arts and academic departments. The program aims to help students and faculty integrate technology into their classrooms and artwork.

Film and Digital Media and Theatre Design and Production are among the other programs that experiment with technology as needed. Integration of technology into a classroom depends on the teacher's levels of commitment and confidence. The school administration's support for technology integration has grown over the years, leading to upgrades in infrastructure and the expansion of IT staffing. The school has trained teachers in the use of classroom technology and prioritized the purchase of classroom tools such as document cameras and smart boards.

Moving forward we shall give careful attention to the responsible use of technology, to evaluation of its effectiveness, and to assessing the impact of technology use on student learning. Reflection on the importance of a global perspective has permeated campus conversations about technology and communication, with consideration of the benefits of "unplugging" emerging as central to mission-sensitive discussions.

9. What input does the school gather directly from the students themselves, and how is this information used in curricular and other decision-making?

**Answer:**

We have often gathered input from students by inconsistent means, despite seeing more consistency since our last accreditation. A major advance was the creation of a Retention Committee, charged with systematic analysis of our admission and enrollment issues. The committee sought methods to collect data about the decision-making processes of applicants and enrolled students, with the goal of assessing and addressing student issues.

An early finding was that the only student survey consistently in use was the one administered by teachers to assess their own courses. The survey was originally designed to help teachers make individual improvements, but we are now trying to standardize this method of data collection to yield a clearer vision of school-wide satisfaction issues.

The Retention Committee has also recommended the following strategies for data collection, some of which are highly relevant to this self-study:

- Develop a standard exit interview process for all departing students, whether they graduate, withdraw, or simply choose not to return. The process should be carried out prior to departure and should also include an interview and/or questionnaire for the student's parents.
- For graduating seniors: conducted through Naviance/College Counseling with the support of Advisors

- For students who withdraw: conducted by Student Services (unless the reason is an obvious one, such as a medical issue)
- For students who choose not to return: conducted by Advisors
- Issue general student and parent surveys consistently, one at the end of each semester, and standardize and shorten student and parent surveys to three simple questions: What do you want Idyllwild Arts to stop doing, to start doing, and to continue doing?
- Add to our website a virtual Suggestion Box, accessible all year to students and parents and monitored by Student Services.
- Develop a system of checks and balances for all arts and academic faculty and departments, including:
  - Scheduled student and parent evaluations through an efficient, anonymous system
  - A clear, consistent internal evaluation system for all faculty, staff, and administrators

Since its inception, the Retention Committee has presented in both administrative meetings and full faculty meetings. Discussion of findings and alternative means of assessing satisfaction and student learning now permeates campus-wide conversations on many levels.

10. In the past few years, what have alumni/ae generally reported as the most valuable or appealing features of the learning experience, as well as areas that the school should work to improve? Has the school made any changes in response?

**Answer:**

In the past we used the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) survey to monitor alumni satisfaction and school performance. While some administrators culled useful information from the lengthy reports, the overwhelming volume of data made the survey tedious and inefficient for purposes of school-wide assessment and improvement. We have therefore stopped using the SNAAP survey.

The results of a comprehensive alumni survey were returned shortly before the time of this writing, and our strategic planning consultant, Connor Associates, will provide detailed analysis of the feedback. However, it is notable that between ninety and ninety-two percent of alumni indicated either agreement or strong agreement with each of the following:

- overall satisfaction is "high" or "very high"
- the school still impacts their lives today
- if they could start over, they would probably choose the school again
- the school helped them live independently and prepared them for creative thinking
- the school is meeting or exceeding its mission
- the arts training is effective and they received a solid grounding in the foundations of their discipline

Challenges moving forward include:

- academic course quality and rigor
- college counseling

- increasing cross-disciplinary and collaborative educational processes
- networking and alumni
- facilities
- development of business survival skills
- oral and written communications skills

The strategic planning process will address and plan in detail for many of these issues. We have already founded a Parent Association and reinvigorated engagement with alumni, along with development of a formal Alumni Association. Additionally, in the last two years the new Director of College Counseling has introduced a four-year college counseling curriculum, integrated with the academics-based Life Skills program in cooperation with Students Services. This comprehensive approach to college counseling will give our students superior preparation for their college applications. Art in Society, Creative Technology, and the Arts Enterprise Laboratory are facilitating cross-disciplinary projects, while the Arts Enterprise Laboratory is fostering alumni engagement.

11. Based on the responses to the questions above, what does the school conclude are the two or three most important areas that it should address to optimize the student learning experience?

**Answer:**

1. We must define more clearly our educational priorities based on our newly adopted mission. We need to ask ourselves what we want our students to learn and why.
2. We must continue to explore means of assessing student learning with the goal of being able to prove that we are doing what we say we are doing.

Responses to these demands for more precise measurement of the school's achievements are emerging from our comprehensive strategic planning process. At the basis of institutional planning are reorganization of our mission and examination of how to put the new mission into practice. The new mission statement provides an umbrella for both the Idyllwild Arts Summer Program and Idyllwild Arts Academy, but the mission's generality must be discharged in specific Academy policies and actions concerning educational priorities and resource allocation. As we ponder what we want our students to learn and why, we need to continue to seek the dynamic balance of time and money that permits training for artistic excellence as well as experimentation in means of satisfying academic and personal expectations.

As for the assessment of learning, the challenge for a school like ours, where individuality is fundamental, is to develop reliable methods of assessment: standards without standardization, so to speak. Solidifying our assessment procedures and determining what should count as evidence of student success should be priorities. Greater use of ESLR-based evaluations, narrative student self-evaluations, and metric/narrative evaluations by grade-level advisors may contribute to a more holistic assessment of student progress.

## 4. Faculty and Pedagogy

**Assigned Collaborator(s):** none

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*The school has a clear set of criteria for teacher effectiveness that reflects its mission and pedagogical goals and that informs hiring, professional growth, and evaluation. Through regular assessment of*



*pedagogical effectiveness, which includes student learning outcomes, the school seeks to strengthen teaching and learning.*

#### Context Statement for Standard

To engage students deeply, cultivating in them both a seriousness of purpose and a delight in learning, is the work of an effective faculty. A school's core pedagogical values and practices must not only take into careful account the characteristics of the learners and the nature of the subject matter, but also reflect the school's educational mission. Therefore, the faculty is at the heart of the school's work. Their competencies and gifts as professionals, their relationships as colleagues, and their human qualities not only shape the learning environment, but also deeply impact the students' individual experiences in and beyond the classroom. A school's assessment of and reflection on these critical elements are essential to the vitality and effectiveness of the instructional program.

#### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. Teachers consistently embody the core values and ethos of the school, and they embrace its mission and goals.
2. The educational background, professional experience, and training of faculty members qualify them for the specific teaching responsibilities to which they are assigned.
3. The faculty support and work constructively with each other and the administration in achieving the school's goals for teaching and learning.
4. Faculty members pursue ongoing personal and professional growth.
5. A regular faculty evaluation process is consistent, well defined, and broadly understood and supported by the faculty.
6. Teachers work collaboratively and actively pursue building positive relationships with their students and with other adults in the school community.
7. Faculty members actively engage in the ongoing review of program and pedagogy and in the design and development of innovations and improvements in teaching and learning practices.
8. The school has written, published learning expectations across grade levels and subject areas.
9. There is thorough, comprehensive, and secure cumulative record-keeping in place for the documentation of student progress.

#### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. A process of faculty evaluation is regularly undertaken and documented.

**Answer:** Yes

#### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. How effectively are faculty members engaged in the process of assessing and improving teaching and learning?

**Answer:**

Faculty is engaged in campus-wide conversation in several ways. The teachers and dorm parents who spend so much time with our students initiate most changes in policies, programs, curriculum, etc., through regularly scheduled faculty meetings and dorm staff meetings. In addition, committees are sometimes formed to do concentrated research and recommend courses of action on specific topics.

The Head of School, Deans, and Department Chairs meet weekly to discuss programmatic and curricular issues. The Head makes final decisions in consultation with the Deans. The upper administration is responsible for ensuring that all decisions align with the school mission.

All departments meet regularly to discuss pedagogy, scope and sequence, and ways to improve teaching. Teachers drive course development and new course proposals and have also initiated changes in course scheduling and campus events. In recent years the school has actively sought chances for collaboration between the arts and academics. We have also given increasing attention to designing developmentally appropriate curriculum, in part because our freshmen and sophomore populations have grown.

In the arts, students are assessed according to level rather than grade to ensure developmentally appropriate curriculum. For example, dance courses are divided into beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. InterArts has developed foundational courses that encourage students to experiment with different disciplines, explore intersections between disciplines, and think critically about the purpose(s) of art.

Another example of implementing interdisciplinary skills and paying attention to

developmental skills is the Humanities Department's development of a senior capstone project which would reflect a student's cumulative experience at a higher level. The project will require integration of a variety of critical thinking, writing, and oral and visual presentation skills. Students will draw from their passion for their art, as well as from the skills they have acquired in their academic courses. Freshman and sophomore Humanities courses will introduce the skills needed to prepare students for the capstone project.

The ESL and Mathematics Departments have given greater care to placing students. All international applicants, most of whom will need ESL courses, are interviewed and given a comprehensive English-level placement test via Skype, and ESL and non-ESL students whose math levels are unclear are also tested online over the summer.

Finally, the faculty have recognized the importance of helping freshmen and sophomores adjust to boarding school by adding study hall to their daytime schedules. This has helped them with time management and seems to have reduced stress levels.

Feedback from students and families has led to enriched academic offerings. Academic departments have focused more on preparing students for the rising competitiveness of colleges and conservatories while providing a broad and deep education. The school has added additional sections of Honors courses, science courses, and computer electives, making it possible for students to apply to top-tier universities. ESL has revised its curriculum to give students better preparation for mainstream courses. The College Counselors have collaborated with our Life Skills teacher on a curriculum to help students at all levels set goals and plan strategically for college or conservatories.

Also resulting from heightened student interest in community service and arts activism, a math teacher, the InterArts Chair, and the former Humanities Chair have teamed up to found the Art in Society program, which, like our new faculty-developed Creative Technology Program, encourages collaboration by our arts and academic faculties to promote innovative and creative thinking across all disciplines. Both programs model our conviction that academics and the arts should inform one another, while helping to educate students in critical and innovative thinking skills with real-life applications.

2. Explain the process by which the school determines the qualifications of teachers for the courses

they teach. List and explain any faculty assignments that do not align directly with academic preparation. How does the school support faculty with such assignments and ensure their effectiveness?

**Answer:**

Our arts teachers have expertise in their own fields and most are active in their professions. Academic faculty do not teach subjects for which they lack specific qualifications, with the exception of the occasional part-time ESL teacher, who will be expected to have a degree in a related field such as Literature or History. The ESL Department's frequent meetings, committed collegiality, and clear guidelines for reading materials, pacing, and other elements crucial to strong teaching enable such part-timers to perform at a high level in the classroom.

Faculty members teach a variety of courses to keep their teaching fresh and to keep them familiar with different learning levels and how courses build on each other.

The school encourages professional development, providing funding for conferences, summer study, and opportunities for artists to take part in professional productions and residencies.

3. Evaluate how program decisions are made within the school through the involvement of teachers and academic administrators in program planning and decision-making. Assess the process in terms of its effectiveness and its consistency with the philosophy and culture of the school.

**Answer:**

Open communication between administration and faculty allows for programmatic evolution. As previously indicated, faculty generate many of our initiatives for programmatic change. For example, the Art in Society program took a full year to establish because the teachers involved needed time to meet with different constituencies so that they could gather input and continually revise their articulation of the program's goals. By the time the program was implemented, all teachers and administrators had been well informed.

In addition, the new Coordinator of Creative Technology position was vetted by both the department chairs and the administration. This position, designed to expand the use of technology throughout the Academy's program, grew out of a popular Computer Design course on which a mathematics teacher and a visual arts teacher collaborated. These changes, like other smaller ones including the new block schedule and the addition of daytime study hall for freshmen and sophomores, were discussed in administration and department meetings and were announced several times during faculty meetings.

Nevertheless, faculty sometimes feel blindsided by program decisions. More could be done to communicate to faculty how decisions align with the school mission in order to help them understand the program's purpose and evolution, and post-decision discussions at faculty meetings could facilitate fruitful revisions.

Questions often arise about the effects of new programs on our students' already busy schedules, and we need to give closer attention to this issue, perhaps by looking at ways to pull arts and academics resources together. Permitting certain arts credits to count also toward academic requirements, or identifying assignments that could count across the curriculum, might lighten the students' schedules while also developing broadly applicable skills and promoting recognition of themes that are common across the disciplines. Closer scrutiny of our programs and expectations might relieve not only student schedules, but also the tensions that sometimes arise between academics and the arts.

A relatively simple and altogether practical way to create a more satisfactory balance between arts and academics would be to assign one person or one group of people to oversee the calendar and thereby prevent its over-packing.

4. Given that a school's values must be embodied by the faculty, what elements of the recruitment, hiring, and orientation processes help to ensure that new teachers will actively embrace the school's core values, especially with regard to their pedagogical approaches?

**Answer:**

The school recruits faculty through arts networks, personal connections, Carney Sandoe, CalWest, and advertisements on our website.

Because Idyllwild Arts Academy is a remotely situated residential school, suitability for life in our community is an essential job qualification. The interview process often takes two days, since a candidate must meet all of the community's constituencies. Faculty and staff submit feedback about the candidate, who needs to understand the unique challenges our students face in balancing arts with academics.

The candidate must appreciate the arts even if he or she is an academic teacher who requires no artistic expertise. Academic candidates must grasp the value of integrating arts into the academic curriculum to honor our students' love of the arts and to exploit that love for the sake of finding unorthodox approaches to academics. Fifty-six percent of our student population is international, so candidates must also show cultural sensitivity and a global awareness acquired through travel or extensive study.

An orientation process introduces new faculty to our school and its history, assigns faculty buddies to check in with, and explains school policies. Some new faculty have asked for a more comprehensive orientation, since—especially when service as a Dorm Parent is required—adjusting to our culture as a remote residential arts school can be a singular experience. This year a welcoming committee has made new faculty feel comfortable and given them a group of people to rely on for any needed help, and the last two years we have hosted social gatherings for new faculty and Department Chairs.

New teachers meet regularly with their Department Chairs to guarantee curricular alignment with school culture. Departments have teaching guidelines, yet we also encourage fresh pedagogic approaches in an open environment that invites new ideas.

Many of the teachers who consider employment by Idyllwild Arts Academy object that our salaries are inadequate to their off-campus housing needs. Furthermore, our remoteness makes them place high value on a sense of belonging to the school community, yet we have limited faculty housing options.

5. Evaluate the extent to which a commitment to the school's values and purpose is broadly shared by the faculty, and explain what happens when this is not the case.

**Answer:**

Uniting the faculty around our mission is easy. Idyllwild Arts Academy teachers value the arts and have been recruited specifically for this environment. But addressing social, emotional, and ethical concerns can be challenging. Some teachers argue that expectations for our students' personal development are not always made clear to faculty who are not also Dorm Parents or in some way connected to Student Services.

Informal discussion of students' emotional, social, and ethical needs often takes place in faculty or department meetings, but, outside of scheduled dorm and Student Services meetings, formal discussions of these topics are rare. At one time, students of concern and troubling issues such as bullying, addictive gaming, and drug use were brought up in faculty meetings, but in recent years we have moved those conversations to dorm staff and department meetings.

In the wake of faculty calls for formal discussion of students of concern, it was recently decided that departments will identify such students. Chairs will give the names to the Deans and the Head of School, who will decide which students warrant discussion in faculty meetings. The Head is also working with a committee to generate all-faculty discussion of transgender issues.

In consideration of students' developmental needs, the school now requires daytime study hall for freshmen and sophomores, who generally struggle more with time management than older students do. Some teachers suggest that the school should continue to look at developing curriculum and programs to address the needs of our large freshman and sophomore populations.

The Gender and Sexuality course offered as a senior elective this spring will help address some relevant student emotional and social needs. Also this year, our College Counselors are working closely with our Life Skills instructors to underscore the importance of ethical reflection, goal setting, and healthy choices, and the results will be reported back to faculty.

International students acclimating to a new culture have particular needs, so we need to put greater emphasis on addressing these through dorm and faculty discussions and close examination of our approaches in the classroom.

6. How were the school's criteria for teacher effectiveness developed, and how are they embedded in the teacher evaluation process? How well does this process support the improvement of teaching?

**Answer:**

Particularly over the last two years, discussion of how to evaluate teaching efficacy has been ongoing among the Deans and Chairs, who wish to make sure that evaluations occur across the board in both arts and academics. The Head of School decided recently that Chairs in both arts and academics must submit written reviews of all full-time teachers. We are in the process of strengthening all HR processes, including faculty and staff evaluation.

Our evaluation process supports improved teaching because it consists principally of dialogue between the Chair and the faculty member. Teachers submit their goals to their Chairs at the start of the school year, and these goals drive the evaluation process. Chairs use them to support their teachers, guide classroom observations, and examine teacher growth during the year.

Written reviews reflect a teacher's goals, the results of classroom observations, and other contributions to the school community, including service in advising students.

Deans and Chairs are evaluated on the basis of their leadership skills as well as their teaching as they strive to inspire and collaborate with faculty.

Two years ago a Compensation Committee studied faculty compensation and recommended tying compensation to evaluations, and subsequently the President and the Head of School began to develop a comprehensive evaluation and compensation system that would categorize faculty as developing, mid-career, and master teachers. The President is reviewing the proposal.

7. Assess the quality and effectiveness of the professional development that the school provides for teachers as individuals, as members of departments or divisions, and as a larger group of colleagues.

**Answer:**

The Department Chairs, the Academic Dean, and the Head of School have proven generous with

funds for professional development initiatives that promote better teaching and show promise of yielding departmental or school-wide benefits. Faculty wishing to take part in professional development must submit pertinent information to their Department Chair, or to the Dean of Academics or the Head. Pertinent information includes logistical details of the trip as well as written responses to questions about anticipated benefits to the teacher, to students, and to the school as a whole, and about the proposed method of reporting back to the school community.

As ambitious life-long learners, many of our teachers take classes during the summer. For example, our printmaking teacher studied traditional techniques in Istanbul and brought them back to her classes, and our Humanities teacher of Gender and Sexuality took a gender and sexuality class over the summer to prepare.

Our teachers often visit other schools and attend conferences in quest of new ideas, and sometimes they present at conferences. Our Coordinator of Creative Technology (a mathematics teacher) and our Visual Arts Chair recently presented their ideas about arts and technology collaboration at an Arts Schools Network conference in Seattle. Last spring our ESL Chair and one of her colleagues made a well-received presentation on our approach to teaching ESL at the TABS Global Symposium.

Teachers present their professional development experiences at faculty meetings because we believe in community-wide sharing of ideas.

8. Describe and assess the extent to which a culture of collaboration exists for teachers across different grades, disciplines, and divisions and the impact of it on program and student learning.

**Answer:**

Young people can realize cross-disciplinary skills and collaborative learning, widely seen as crucial to twenty-first-century education, only if these are modeled by their teachers.

Administration has been supportive of faculty-led efforts to increase collaboration. Of course, collaboration can seem to demand more time than we have. One way that we have worked to overcome this is by inaugurating an Intermester. During this week-long program immediately after Winter Break, faculty will team teach week long collaborative courses not offered within the regular curriculum.

Our collaborative efforts are gaining momentum through more formalized programming. The ideas about arts and technology collaboration developed by our Visual Arts Chair and the math teacher who is our Coordinator of Creative Technology grew out of a class they team-taught, and academic teachers often welcome arts faculty to their classes as guest lecturers. Collaborative freedom is exercised by Composition students who set creative writers' words to music, dancers who contribute their talents to InterArts projects, and creative writers who craft short plays for Theatre students.

Yet we could do more. Some teachers who want more collaboration say there are not enough hours in the day. It may take a critical mass of new cross-disciplinary courses—a musician teaching film scoring or theatre costume designer helping with student films—to persuade departments fully to embrace collaboration and set aside certain courses long regarded as fundamental.

9. What are the school's expectations of all faculty members in addressing the social, emotional, and ethical development of their students? How effectively are these expectations met? How does the school determine this?

**Answer:**

Please see response to Question 5.

10. Based on the responses to the questions above, what does the school conclude are the two or three most important areas that it should address to maximize faculty effectiveness?

**Answer:**

We see the following as areas on which to focus to maximize faculty effectiveness:

1. Evaluation and compensation: We should continue to develop the evaluation process and to seek ways to compensate faculty commensurate with experience, leadership, and community contributions. Since the 2008 economic crisis forced a freeze of the faculty salary scale, we have seen attempts to correct the situation. But we still have no system in place that satisfies faculty or that adequately rewards leadership roles such as Department Chair. We should explore non-monetary means of compensation, e.g., class release for course development, mentoring new teachers, or professional development in a campus "center for learning." Such a center for learning could be a place for further research in specific disciplines or peer-to-peer-mentoring.

2. Collaboration and interdisciplinary innovation: An arts school offers abundant opportunities for such innovations. Collaboration rejuvenates faculty and teaches young people that education succeeds best as dialogue rather than monologue. Collaboration must be promoted by departmental and faculty-wide discussions, and faculty and administration need creativity in scheduling and sensitivity to the limits on our students' time.

3. Curricular focus on our students' social and emotional needs: The emotional well-being of students should receive more attention in faculty discussions and curricular and programmatic decision-making. Faculty must continue to look seriously at the developmental needs of freshmen and sophomores, whose percentages of our student population are on the rise. We also need to look harder at satisfying the emotional and social needs of our huge population of international students.

4. We struggle to attract new qualified teachers because of our shortage of faculty housing. If we cannot offer sufficient housing, perhaps we should compensate faculty who live off campus.

5. Idyllwild Arts is a member of the Consortium of Independent Arts Schools along with Interlochen Arts Academy and Walnut Hill School for the Arts, and we recently completed our third retreat together. This annual professional development event, bringing like-minded people together for collaboration, has become enormously beneficial to our faculty.

## 5. Climate and Community

**Assigned Collaborator(s):** none

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*The school maintains a healthy climate that reflects the values of the mission. That climate is sustained through highly effective communication, and it supports the learning and personal growth of each student. The climate manifests a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and it is evident in the engagement of the school community.*

### Context Statement for Standard

While every school is built around the core values and purpose in the mission, the capacity to live out that mission depends on the quality of relationships among the people who constitute the school community. The "feeling tone" of a campus—what is often called the climate—reflects the human dimension of school life: the sense of comfort and inclusion, trust and respect, integrity, playfulness,

and collaboration that suffuse daily life. School climate can be challenging to measure but is essential to understand because it bears directly on the school's quality of life and its capacity to implement change.

#### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. The school regularly assesses school climate through an inclusive process in order to gauge and improve the health of the community.
2. Faculty-administration communications and relationships are open, comfortable, and productive.
3. In its communications to parents, other school constituencies, and the wider community, the school seeks to ensure understanding of the school's mission and to inspire loyalty and constructive involvement in the life of the school.
4. Alumni/ae and their parents—as well as other constituencies beyond parents of current students—are actively informed about, appropriately engaged in, and supportive of the school.
5. In the context of its mission, the school actively promotes diversity and equity in its student body, fosters cultural competence in its faculty and staff, and seeks to instill in students an appreciation for and understanding of the range of human differences. Students experience the school as a safe, equitable, and inclusive place.
6. The school is committed to identifying and responding to the needs of the full spectrum of its students.
7. Employee morale is high, and employee turnover is low. Student morale is high, and attrition is low. Students and adults generally enjoy and look forward to coming to school.
8. Constituents appreciate, understand, and use the established avenues of communication with the school.
9. Students, staff, and parents are strong advocates of the school and a significant public relations asset.
10. There is an effective process by which families are informed of and educated about policies and practices of the school.
11. There is a positive culture of problem-solving and institutional resilience evident in the faculty and administration of the school.

#### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. The school has clearly stated policies and expectations regarding the behavior of members of the school community, which are well publicized in handbooks, on websites, or by other means.

**Answer:** Yes

#### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. Briefly describe the climate of the school. How does the school assess its climate, and how are members of the community engaged in conversations about the results?

**Answer:**

To fulfill our mission of "Changing lives through the transformative power of the arts," Idyllwild Arts Academy strives for an open and community-oriented climate that encourages rigorous pursuit of artistic and academic excellence. We recognize that wholehearted engagement in



artistic pursuits demands an environment that welcomes authentic expression and creative risks. Aware that diverse viewpoints and experiences enrich the community, our students and faculty support one another with committed demonstrations of mutual respect.

To ensure that all community members promote our mission, the administration solicits input from all by welcoming broad staff and faculty involvement in committee work and holding regular student meetings by dorm, department, and grade level. The Idyllwild Arts Foundation President's door is open to all constituents and, during her first few months on the job, she pointedly invited individual meetings with countless faculty, staff, and Board members, as well as many parents. The school also holds frequent and regular meetings of faculty, staff, and administration to facilitate school-wide communication about issues important to the community.

2. What are the recurring rituals and traditions in the school that feel "sacred" to students and adults? How do they capture or express—and in what ways do they challenge—the school's identity and core values?

**Answer:**

The closing of our weekly All-School meetings with the reminder to the community to "Remember who you are and what you stand for" is a central ritual for our community. The collective declaration at the All-School meeting is introduced by the Head of School, but finished by our students as they transition into the weekend, reminding them that this time of freedom is also a time for responsibility. Other traditions include the faculty and student opening concerts to start the school year, and the Baccalaureate and Commencement ceremonies. The faculty arts performances and shows demonstrate forcefully to students that their arts teachers are passionate working professionals. Graduation calls upon our student speakers to remind the entire community that determination to overcome failure—for example, when one falls during a dance recital or plays the wrong notes—is essential to an education that honors the dependence of creation on risk.

Another important tradition is the International Dinner that takes place during the spring semester. Students submit recipes from their own countries, and groups of students prepare meals for the entire school community. Well over a hundred students took part in the most recent International Dinner, which involved:

- thirty-two faculty and staff kitchens and the dining hall in full operation
- more than forty faculty and staff working with student cooking groups
- almost six hundred different ingredients
- thirty-four student groups preparing sixty-nine different entrees, desserts, beverages, and appetizers, including Fina Denne, BBQ Bulgogi, Taratar, Banica, Brigadeiro, and Sharko.

3. Every school is a self-renewing community, into which new members—students and adults alike—are continuously invited. Assess the effectiveness with which newer generations enter into, come to embody, and, in turn, change the culture of the school.

**Answer:**

We welcome new students by packing the first few weeks of school with special activities, including a carnival, the first school dance, and informational meetings by dorm and department. Student leaders (Prefects) are especially helpful in answering new students' questions and easing their adjustment to school culture and the class schedule that accommodates our dual curriculum.

New parents who attend Registration meet dorm staff as they help their children move in, and new international parents attend a special International Parent Orientation that includes

individual meetings with their children's faculty Advisors. Veteran parents who have joined our new Parent Association help new families at Registration. Families receive a weekly email of photos and highlights from the previous week, which also lists upcoming performances and important events. Once a month or more, international parents receive an email about school events from our Manager of International Student Relations that is translated into Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Spanish, Korean, Japanese, Russian, and Turkish. All parents also receive a monthly letter from the Head of School that is translated into these languages.

Before students arrive on campus to start the school year, we conduct orientation for new faculty and new Dorm Parents. The relevant Department Chair explains school systems and procedures to every new teacher, who will also be paired with a helpful faculty buddy. Social events help new faculty establish working and personal relationships with colleagues, and new faculty benefit from ongoing professional development specific to their needs even after the students arrive.

Assessment of effectiveness is ongoing. Through our students of concern process, Dorm Parents' logs, dorm staff meetings, Prefect meetings, and arts department meetings, we continually assess students on their assimilation to and participation in the community, as well as on their individual progress.

4. How effectively does the school engage alumni/ae, grandparents, and others beyond the immediate members of the school community?

**Answer:**

Our new Parent Association and the forthcoming Alumni Association will increase engagement with both of these key constituencies.

Idyllwild Arts already hosts annual Alumni Reunions in Idyllwild, Los Angeles, New York City, San Francisco, Chicago, Tokyo, Japan, Taipei, and Seoul, but the Alumni Association will expand opportunities for alumni to attend performances, exhibitions, and other networking events.

The robust Idyllwild Arts Academy Alumni group on Facebook, which includes some seventy-five percent of our eighteen hundred graduates, updates alumni on employment opportunities and upcoming reunions, while soliciting support for performances, exhibitions, and fundraisers for art projects. The group also facilitates the sharing of alumni memories of the school. Alumni often return to our campus to teach or perform.

The global dispersal of our grandparents has so far prevented us from engaging them as a constituency group, and our application and admission process still makes no provision to collect information about grandparents.

The Associates of Idyllwild arts are a local organization dedicated to the mission of Idyllwild Arts. The roughly one hundred and eighty members (mainly Idyllwild-area residents) raise money for Idyllwild Arts and attend campus performances and gallery openings. Last year the Associates handed off management and operation of the annual Jazz in the Pines scholarship-fundraising festival to Idyllwild Arts Foundation, while continuing their generous tradition of volunteering to make the festival run smoothly. Many Associates also open their homes to students during breaks in the school year, volunteer to address envelopes for school mailings, and represent Idyllwild Arts at the weekly Palm Springs VillageFest street festival.

5. With what diversity-related issues does the school most seriously grapple? How has the school made progress in addressing diversity through the curriculum and in the life of the school?

**Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts Academy currently faces two major diversity-related issues.

The first is the size and scope of our international population and the resulting linguistic and cultural challenges. This year our student body is fifty-six percent international and represents approximately thirty countries, including the United States. Though far more than half of our students are American, Chinese, or Mexican, we also have young people from many other places, including Iran, Vietnam, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Malaysia, and several African nations. In 2012, in recognition of the need for strategies to support this diverse population while also celebrating the consequent advantages and opportunities, an Enrollment Committee was established. They were tasked with considering issues such as community-building, placement testing, school assimilation, and enrollment practices. The complete findings were presented to the Head of School for review.

We have implemented several of the committee's data-driven recommendations, including creation of a new position, Coordinator of International Student Life (now Manager of International Student Relations), and of a full day of orientation devoted explicitly to new international families. We also have a comprehensive ESL Department staffed by five full-time teachers and an ESL Summer Intensive program to serve students who need extra help (including many new ninth-graders with beginning English skills). In addition, faculty, staff, and student Prefects receive diversity sensitivity training at the start of the school year.

Finally, we highlight the international nature of our community with activities that include language clubs and our annual International Dinner, and with dorm assignments that deliberately mix different linguistic and cultural groups together.

Our second major diversity-related issue is a large LGBT community that is for the most part out and not just accepted, but fully supported. However, we see clear need for a more coherent and consistent policy for addressing the needs of this component of our exceptionally diverse student population. We have, for instance, two students undergoing medical treatment to align their gender identities with their biology, others who are out at school and with their friends but not yet with their families, and many questioning students. As their individual needs vary, so do our responsibilities to offer support. The Head of School has appointed a committee charged with research that will lead to recommendation of a school policy toward transgender students, especially with regard to housing.

6. How do current parents contribute to a positive school climate and strengthen the sense of community on which institutional health depends?

**Answer:**

An international boarding school presents challenges in organizing and sustaining parental involvement. Our brand-new Parent Association, created to increase parent involvement in their children's education, has already helped with Registration and Family Weekend, although their work in supporting both parents and students and in fundraising has barely gotten off the ground. The Steering Committee consists of families from China, Korea, and Japan as well as Southern California.

Parents help build community by enforcing our expectations of student behavior. The newest example of this assistance from parents is their use of our new REACH software program to improve tracking of and response to student requests for leaves and away permissions.

7. Provide a recent specific example of healthy, effective communication between faculty and administration regarding a difficult issue. What factors made it successful?

**Answer:**

In 2014 the school was approached by a DreamWorks subsidiary that produces YouTube content aimed at the "tween" audience. An alumnus had pitched to AwesomenessTV an idea to feature our current students and their journeys as artists and students. After vetting by students, faculty, the Board, and parents, the project went ahead. Though it was successful and is currently airing on the go90 platform, it has raised issues of privacy and compensation of artists for their work.

To encourage discussion of these issues, the school invited the prominent musician, songwriter, and record producer T Bone Burnett and the writer, film producer, and scholar Jonathan Taplin to talk to our teachers about art in the digital age. Faculty turnout was large and enthusiastic and the question-and-answer session was lively.

At the subsequent faculty meeting, administration encouraged follow-up of the issue, which admittedly bears little relation to the school's daily operation. But faculty discussion was bracing and provocative, with several of our teaching artists recounting personal experiences that sharply contradicted the guest speakers' shared perspective. The discussion did more than give our faculty much to think about as they prepare our students for the challenges facing artists in the digital age. It also underscored our administration's desire for healthy and effective communication with faculty, since administrators allowed all voices to be heard, and at great length.

8. Reflect on what sustains and strengthens the school's climate and community and what its vulnerabilities might be. If a group of current constituents set out to undermine the school's community, how difficult would it be? What steps could be taken to reduce the school's vulnerability in this area?

**Answer:**

The Idyllwild Arts climate of acceptance, inclusion, and powerful bonds between faculty and students is fostered by the nature of the school as a heavily residential community. Almost ninety percent of students live on campus, where many teachers also reside. Faculty and students are often present together at readings, dances, concerts, etc.

Yet this open climate that invites strong relationships also leaves us vulnerable, since any constituent wishing for ruptures in the community could easily smear our faculty with false accusations. Students on a trip chaperoned by a lone teacher could run off and claim that the teacher gave permission, while our high incidence of unobserved one-on-one interaction between students and faculty creates openings for charges of improper conduct.

9. Reflect on a time in the last six years when the climate of the school became significantly challenging.

**Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts Foundation's President, who was also the Academy's founding and long-serving Head of School, retired in 2011. His strong and reassuring presence left a void which the Board

filled, after searching a large pool of candidates, with an individual whose disappointing service ended in July 2012.

The Board then devised a plan for interim leadership, calling on its Chair and Vice Chair to engage an Interim Head of School and an Interim Executive Director in two years of weekly conference calls to reach consensus on essential strategic decisions.

Faculty and staff were empowered to work with the Board to determine the precise form of leadership required by both the Foundation and the Academy, as well as the personal qualities and experiences needed by that leadership.

Meanwhile, the Interim Head of School was made permanent Head.

Ultimately, a Search Committee chosen from the Board, Associates of Idyllwild Arts, faculty, and staff ended an intensive and lengthy search for a new President by hiring a visionary educator to lead the Foundation and the Academy into the future.

This change in leadership was unsettling, particularly in the wake of the failed first attempt to replace our founding Head, and the challenge was intensified by economic uncertainty.

10. Describe the process used to identify and address the problems that arose.

**Answer:**

Please see question 9.

11. Cite concrete examples—major events, achievements, crises, and/or challenges—where the character of the school community clearly showed itself.

**Answer:**

The character of the community can be seen in several different ways and at several different levels. After the departure of the former President in July 2012, a number of teachers and administrators took on additional responsibilities, oblivious to personal sacrifices of time and money.

In May 2014 the community faced the sudden death of a longtime Humanities teacher. Students and faculty rallied to support one another and the teacher's spouse and child, who are, respectively, a teacher and a student at the school. A Visual Arts teacher built a bookcase for our library to display books and art donated by faculty, staff, and students to honor the late teacher's memory.

Service groups, including our National Honor Society branch and Art in Society, spend free time working on community projects that reach beyond the campus boundaries. The Idyllwild HELP Center, Idyllwild Elementary School's smARTS program, Living Free Animal Sanctuary, and nearby retirement homes are among the benefactors of the students' service.

We must sometimes pull together under less happy circumstances to decide consequences for serious infractions of school rules. But the unpleasant work of our Judicial Review Committees reminds us that violations of community trust presuppose the existence of both community and trust, and that these are sources of strength for us all.

12. Take 10 pictures or five 30-second videos that richly convey the climate of the school. Please submit them, via a link, with an explanation of how these particular samples were created and why they were chosen.

**Answer:**

1. Terushi Video Clip (start at 3:10): This video was created by one of our Japanese students for his younger brother's birthday. Narushi Fukuda organized the message in his free time and asked the entire school to send their greetings during the weekly All-School meeting. Love and respect for family and community are evident in the faces of the students in the clip. [Terushi's Birthday!!mp4.url](#)
2. Rain Dance for Idyllwild ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nixWV\\_ft5IM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nixWV_ft5IM)): In 2013, during the evacuation of the campus and town because of a nearby wildfire, one of our students organized a "video rain dance" which involved students from around the world. Their support of our community, both the school and the town, was greatly appreciated.
3. Image 1 Advisor Dinner - This image is an example of the type of relationships we try to cultivate between the adult and student communities. This photo from our Holiday Advisor dinner is an example of the activities that are planned throughout the year which foster relationships across the campus. In this photo, our Director of Alumni and Parent Relations is celebrating the winter holiday with his advisees. Both faculty and staff

participate in the advisor program.



4. Image 2: Fire Prevention - After the Mountain fire, the students and faculty were very concerned with finding ways to band together and help the community. Here is a way that our Prefect student leaders joined the cause and invited the Idyllwild Fire Department to teach them safe and effective fire prevention. The students care and commitment to their adopted homes is authentic and appreciated.



5. Image 3: Japan Alums - This is an example of the far reaching support we have from our alumni. This picture was taken when our Head of School and ESL Dept. Chair visited Japan two years ago. While some of these students graduated years ago, the ties that they have to

our community are deep rooted and long lasting.



6. Image 4: Steamroller Printing - During one of the phases of our Lowman Hall construction process, our printmaking teacher organized a session in steamroller printing. When the construction company failed to show with the steamroller, the students attempted to work together to ensure the project's success. While the kids approach was admirable, the Director of Physical Plant stepped in with the school's backhoe to complete the project. Our faculty, staff and students are resourceful problem solvers who work together to

support each other's projects.



7. Image 5: Mexico Parent Reception - Our International parents are supportive and appreciative of IAF's work with their children. We host many International Parent receptions across the globe and the families are consistently warm and inviting. Despite the demographic spread of our parent community, they are engaged and supportive of the

work we do with their children.



8. Image 6: smARTS participation - Our local elementary school sponsors a program called smARTS. This grant supported program allows local artists to teach arts based curriculum to the primary and middle school grades. This program originated by local parents after budgetary cuts to arts funding in the California public schools. Over the years, our IAA students have become more active and involved in the program. This past spring, IAA;s chapter of the National Honor Society took on the task of teaching all classes for the smARTS program. This is an example of how our students are generous with sharing their



time and talents as well as appreciative of the greater Idyllwild community.



9. Image 7: International Dinner - In the

spring semester each year, the entire community enjoys International Dinner. Students cook meals, share music, and create educational materials about their home countries and familial heritage. It is a wonderful way that we exchange and support each other's native

traditions.



## 6. Residential Life

**Assigned Collaborator(s):** none

*The residential life program of the school is designed and structured to reflect the school's mission, to complement other programs, and to ensure a safe environment that fosters student personal and social growth.*

### Context Statement for Standard

Schools that provide boarding programs to some or all of their students have unique opportunities to create a community experience for students that constitutes a powerful social curriculum of its own. Effective boarding programs are mission-driven and reflect the values of the school. The residential life program assumes responsibility for providing a "home away from home," as well as a comprehensive educational program for student growth and development.

### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. There are clearly defined responsibilities for the residential staff, which is well trained and highly qualified. Staff training is based on an explicit set of values and goals for the boarding student experience.
2. All faculty, administration, and staff understand and are capable of serving *in loco parentis* on behalf of boarding students.
3. There are comprehensive, well developed residential policies that are consistently applied and regularly reviewed.



4. Facilities are safe and well maintained.
5. There is effective supervision of boarding students, both on and off campus.
6. Opportunities have been created for student participation in reviewing the residence program.
7. Thoughtful programming and activities for students after class hours and on weekends are mission-driven, with a clear rationale based on the school's priorities for the social development of its students.
8. There is positive and meaningful connection between boarding and day students, fostered by their shared experiences of school life.
9. The residential community thrives in a climate of trust, care, honesty, and collaboration that is evident and palpable.

#### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. The school provides nutritious and well-planned meal services.

**Answer:** Yes

2. There are published and publicized policies and expectations with regard to residential life at the school.

**Answer:** Yes

3. The school provides qualified personnel, external resources, and programs to support the mental health and wellness of boarding students.

**Answer:** Yes

#### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. Describe and evaluate how residential life policies are developed, along with the frequency of and process for their review.

**Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts Academy develops and evaluates its residential policies by way of feedback from students, faculty, and staff who complete yearly evaluations that include the topic of policy. The policies, which can be updated by the Dean of Students or other senior administrators, change most often on a yearly basis. There is room for more consultation on policies and procedures with Dorm Parents before contracts are offered for the next school year. Formal review of policies and procedures has been requested to obtain a wider range of feedback in the future.

2. How are residence program staff members selected and trained?

**Answer:**

The Dean of Students interviews candidates for the Residential Life staff, who are usually teachers. Training at the start of and throughout the school year prepares dorm staff to handle issues such as eating disorders, self-harm, depression, etc. Dorm Heads practice mentorship with new dorm staff annually, giving everyone a chance to mentor and be mentored. Dorm Heads shadow new Dorm Parents during their first few nights of duty and benefit each night and weekend from the service of a well-trained Administrator on Call. Dorm Heads also involve Academy employees who do not belong to direct care staff, such as people from Development or Marketing, in activities with students to augment the sense of school-wide community.

Besides the Dean of Students, there are three additional full-time Residential Life staff members, including an Administrative Assistant who supports the staff by doing paperwork and scheduling. The Director of Student Services and the Student Services Coordinator are new to their jobs this school year, but both positions were filled by internal promotion, and many of their duties were not new to them. Reorganization of the department had necessitated adjustment of titles and duties.

3. How is the performance of the residence program staff members evaluated? What constitutes success and effectiveness in meeting the goals and objectives of the residence program?

**Answer:**

The Director of Student Services evaluates Dorm Heads and Dorm Heads evaluate their own Dorm Parents. Dorm Heads also provide feedback for the evaluations of the Director of Student Services and the Dean of Students. Gradual implementation of peer evaluations (such as Dorm Parent to Dorm Parent) will follow, and student feedback on dorm staff, the Director of Student Services, and the Dean of Students is pending. Although student feedback was not obtained last year, it had been helpful the year before, when qualitative data from written evaluations indicated success in meeting Residential Life goals. The Head of School conducts the yearly evaluation of the Dean of Students, using the Dean's goals and self-evaluation as a starting point and including feedback from dorm staff, administrative colleagues, and students.

4. Recognizing that entering school as a boarding student presents its own set of challenges and opportunities, describe how the school assists new students in transitioning successfully into boarding school life. Assess the effectiveness of this support.

**Answer:**

We strongly support new boarding students. We offer new international students and their families a full day of orientation to both the U.S. and residential school life. We dedicate a day of registration to all new students for individual meetings with key administrators and helpful shadowing by our student leaders (Prefects), we pair each new student with a "buddy" in his or her own major, and our new Parent Prefect Program draws on parents of returning students to advise, and, in some cases, comfort new parents who are leaving their children for the first time. The first week of school features extra assemblies, dorm meetings, and community-building activities. Faculty Advisors contact parents before school begins to assure them of their willingness to give personal support.

5. What approaches does the school use to balance student needs for independence and freedom with the school's responsibility to provide adult supervision? How is the effectiveness of this balance reviewed and assessed?

**Answer:**

Review and assessment of our disciplinary and dorm credit system are continual and formal evaluations are annual. The system underlines the link between freedom and responsibility, apportioning more structure only when students show they need it. Students can earn study release by making the Dean's List, release from study hall with a 3.7 GPA, and Friday night s'mores or ice cream parties from no loss of dorm credits during the week. We invite students who show leadership potential to become Prefects after a lengthy application and shadowing process, and seniors who display maturity and responsibility get special privileges. Finally, our new REACH system allows students to check themselves in and out at certain times of day. REACH is an online boarding school application that facilitates real-time tracking of student whereabouts. Students who abuse REACH will lose valued privileges such as weekend off-campus permission.

6. How does the school help boarding students to develop capacities for wise decision-making in complex areas of daily life—particularly with regard to drugs, alcohol, sexuality, and personal integrity? What aspects of the school's program in this area have yielded intended results, and what challenges remain to be addressed?

**Answer:**

Both in dorms and in large student groups, we teach a Residential Life curriculum that encourages healthy individual and communal choices. We also offer a Life Skills class, overseen by the Dean of Academics and taught by our College Counselors and our PE instructor, to support students who have engaged in unhealthy behaviors. Health Track, another supportive offering, is confidential and includes counseling and random drug screenings. Our Dorm Heads and Dorm Parents commit themselves to modeling healthy behavior and effective problem-solving, as do our thirty student Prefects. These adult and student leaders are available around the clock to give help as needed.

Teaching healthy coping skills is nevertheless a challenge in an environment that puts young people in classrooms or practice rooms for most of the day starting at 8 am—sometimes until 10 pm—and that can mean classes six days a week.

Our on-campus counseling staff of one full-time and one part-time counselor provides individual counseling, and on-campus support groups are also available to students.

7. Evaluate the effectiveness of the school's efforts to meet the social and emotional needs of the students in the boarding program.

**Answer:**

Involving the Health Center team in dorm staff meetings continues to improve communication with them so that dorm staff and faculty can quickly help a student dealing with a mental, emotional, or physical problem. Dorm staff members receive ongoing education in their roles.

Our Advisor system provides another point of contact with an adult on campus, pairing between two and six students with a full-time faculty or staff member. This increases our students' adult contact in the school community, expands their socializing with peers, and centralizes communication between the school, the students, and their parents. Each Advisor/advisees group meets formally during the Friday lunch period and also one other time during the week. Social functions such as performance attendance, group dinners, or off-campus excursions are also part of the group's activities.

This holistic approach to the student experience is a helpful way of gauging success and monitoring retention concerns.

8. How does the residence program support the mission of the school? (This question is to be answered by schools that have recently added a boarding program to what was originally a day-school structure).

**Answer:**

N/A

9. Assess the school's effectiveness in ensuring that day and boarding students feel part of a unified community in an environment that fosters connection across the two groups.

**Answer:**

We continue to improve in this area. We have a day student "Dorm Head" who coordinates day student activities, and day student Prefects who seek more ways to involve day students with boarding students. Day students traditionally host the year's most popular dance, the Halloween dance, which always engages boarding students as well. We have recently instituted mandatory attendance at student performances for all students, including day students, and we also have a new Parent Association which enables us to involve more local families.

To educate our day students and their families about the boarding school experience remains a priority. Some arts departments hold regular classes on Saturdays and some mandatory rehearsals, especially during production times for our Music, Theatre and Dance Departments, occur on weekends. Films are often shot on Saturdays. All of these require the families of day students to commit to the entire experience.

Day students can use the phone, relax, and congregate during down time in the Day Student Lounge in Krone Library.

10. How are the needs of students from diverse economic, racial, ethnic, religious, family, national, and social backgrounds identified and addressed in the residence program?

**Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts Academy fosters cultural sensitivity in a variety of ways. At the start of the school year we have cultural sensitivity training for all faculty, staff, and Dorm Parents, and during Prefect training our international Prefects talk about their experiences in Residential Life and on campus in general. Prefects take part in a Ropes Course day that elicits different problem-solving methods and thus highlights student diversity, and our Residential Life curriculum and dorm group discussions also examine diversity. As far as possible we assign every boarding student a roommate from a country other than his or her own, which for ESL students means immersion in English.

A topic of increasing concern in all schools is the need to support transgender students, and we are no exception since we see more and more applications from such students. A task force is working to educate itself and the community and to propose a policy statement.

11. How does the school facilitate communication with the parents and/or guardians of boarding students?

**Answer:**

The school regularly facilitates effective communication with parents in many ways:

- Each faculty Advisor regularly updates his or her advisees' parents.
- Edline, our online grading program, continually informs parents about their children's grades, teacher comments, and absences with real-time posting by teachers.
- At designated grading periods we email the parents of students on the D/F list.
- Our REACH system invites parent input on their children's whereabouts at any time.
- The beginning and end of the school year and Family Weekend allow time for parents to meet individually with faculty and staff and to build relationships with them.

- Our new Parent Association meets and greets new parents and makes them feel welcome.
- The Head of School sends a monthly message to parents which is translated into the major languages spoken on campus.
- Parent meetings with the Idyllwild Arts Foundation President have been helpful.
- The Academy Administrative Assistant sends weekly electronic bulletins to all parents.
- The day student "Dorm Head" has an informative Day Student Parent Facebook page.

12. What are the chief areas of strength and significant needs for improvement in the school's boarding program?

**Answer:**

The most often identified need for improvement is in the area of communication. For example:

- Need for continued improved communication on a need-to-know basis between our Health Center and staff and faculty about students with special health issues.
- Need for better communication between the administration and faculty and staff members who have direct contact with students.
- Need for better communication between Residential Life leadership and Dorm Parents.

Additional areas for improvement include:

- Need for more involvement of Residential Life leadership and Administrators on Call in the dorms' daily operations so that they understand better the challenges and problems of dorm life.
- Need for a process to evaluate the student homestay experience.
- Need for more inclusion of day students and their parents in school activities.
- Need for improved education about diverse populations.

The strengths of our Residential Life program include:

- The REACH program, which permits faster and more precise tracking of students. The application is proving effective during its test year even though we are still experimenting.
- Our system for allowing students to balance need for structure with desire for freedom.
- Student leadership opportunities specific to Residential Life.
- Student involvement in the residential community, which teaches them how to live with respect, understanding, and tolerance
- Frequent and meaningful interaction with adults and peers teaches cooperation, acceptance, conflict resolution skills, accountability, and leadership. Our Residential Life program also promotes a strong sense of community and develops important life skills.
- Residential Life at Idyllwild specifically leads to the development of life long relationships: student to teacher, student to dorm staff and student to student.

## 7. Preschool

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*The preschool offers a high quality, developmentally appropriate program that fosters both independence and socialization in a stimulating, safe, and caring environment. The social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children is supported by a qualified, nurturing staff of early childhood educators.*

#### Context Statement for Standard

Schools offering preschool programs must commit themselves to providing a high level of care and supervision and to meeting all published state licensing requirements for preschool operations. These licensing requirements address issues specific to the needs of very young children, and they may include the on-site inspection of facilities by the local regulatory agency. Preschool programs can play a significant role in implementing an institution's educational philosophy, and they can be a crucial element in an overall enrollment management strategy as well. Skilled staffing is integral to the success of any preschool program, and it requires appropriate training combined with caring and patient attitudes.

#### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. Play is a foundational component of the program.
2. Children, parents, and faculty look forward to school each day.
3. The preschool's facilities and equipment are clean, safe, and well maintained.
4. Early childhood teachers and staff members are well qualified for their positions, and adult staffing ratios are appropriate.
5. The program is developmentally appropriate and aligned with the mission and philosophy of the school.
6. The program addresses the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive needs of the child.
7. Teachers understand and utilize instructional practices that take into account individual and group settings.
8. Teachers engage with children in ways that promote trust and demonstrate their care.
9. The indoor and outdoor environments reflect the developmental needs of each age group.
10. The education and inclusion of parents is an important part of the program.
11. The faculty and administration share information with parents regarding their children's progress and growth on a regular and ongoing basis.
12. The school provides professional development for teachers and staff members about best practices, current research, and effective pedagogy in early childhood education.
13. There is a clear policy about admission to the preschool and its relationship to possible matriculation into succeeding grade levels at the school.

#### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. The preschool is in compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations mandated for preschool programs.

No Answer

2. The faculty and administration share information with parents regarding their children's progress and growth on a regular and ongoing basis.

No Answer

3. The school maintains documentation demonstrating that the faculty and staff are qualified for their roles as early childhood educators.

No Answer

4. All inspections of the site are up-to-date and documented.

No Answer

5. A parent handbook contains policies and procedures specific to preschool.

No Answer

### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. Describe the role of the preschool in the overall program of the school, and assess how effective it is in supporting the school's mission. What is the age range for children who attend the preschool, and how are they grouped?

No Answer

2. What are the educational theories and practices that have shaped the current preschool program? What are the fundamental assumptions or beliefs about early childhood development that guide the preschool's work?

No Answer

3. How does the preschool assess and document each child's growth and development within the program? How does the school assess the quality and developmentally appropriate nature of the program itself? What do the results indicate, and how are they used?

No Answer

4. What feedback does the preschool provide to parents regarding their children's progress?

No Answer

5. How does the preschool develop productive partnerships with parents regarding such considerations as student support and effective parenting?

No Answer

6. Evaluate the effectiveness of the communication and collaboration of the preschool staff and faculty with the faculty and staff of other divisions. Are any changes needed?

No Answer

7. What are the most significant strengths of and challenges for the preschool and its program?

No Answer

# III: Financial Sustainability

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## 8. Admission and Enrollment

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*The school has published, consistently applied admission and financial aid policies and procedures that demonstrate a commitment to access and diversity and that are consistent with the school's mission. The admission process identifies students and families who are well matched to the school's program and values. Admission practices are mission-driven and designed to support the financial sustainability of the school.*

### Context Statement for Standard

An admission process, when well conceived, enables a school to attract new members to the student learning community whose talents and personal qualities will enhance the life of the school. The interactions of the admission staff and other school personnel with applicants and their families constitute some of the most direct and important marketing and public relations opportunities available to the school. A thoughtfully designed and effectively implemented admission and enrollment process is important in conveying the essence of the school and ensuring its long-term sustainability.

### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. The school is meeting its targets for enrollment.
2. Student attrition is low.
3. The school complies with all of the provisions of the CAIS Fundamental Membership Requirements and Code of Ethics that govern admission and financial aid policies, processes, and procedures.
4. The school has clear, published criteria for the allocation of need-based financial aid (and for other forms of financial aid, if they exist.)
5. Applicant families are provided information that clearly defines the program, communicates the total costs of attending the school, and identifies the school's expectations of students and families.
6. The school has explicit, published policies with respect to considering applicants who are (a) siblings of currently enrolled students, (b) children of alumni/ae, or (c) children of school employees.
7. Admission personnel are actively involved in marketing and public relations activities that promote the school and generate inquiries and applications.
8. The school has in place admission and financial aid policies and practices that are inviting and welcoming to the broadest possible range of applicant families suited to the mission of the school.
9. The school has published policies regarding diversity that are well understood and that serve as guiding factors in the admission and enrollment program of the school.

### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. Admission criteria and information are published and easily accessible to applicant families.  
**Answer:** Yes
2. School admission and financial aid policies and practices comply with the CAIS Statement of Fundamental Membership Requirements and the CAIS Code of Ethics



**Answer:** Yes

3. Admission policies and practices comply with all applicable federal, state and local non-discrimination statutes and regulations.

**Answer:** Yes

4. The school has a published non-discrimination policy.

**Answer:** Yes

### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. Analyze and interpret the school's dashboard data on admission, enrollment, and financial aid. What are the main findings and the chief implications for the school that emerge from examining the data?

**Answer:**

#### Admission & Enrollment

Applications to Idyllwild Arts Academy have trended upward for several years, and the Academy now receives more applications than ever. The school has also become more selective, denying a record number of applicants for 2015-2016. Yet, in keeping with a national trend, inquiries have fallen.

We are encouraged that the school completed its 2015-2016 enrollment last June, especially since enrollment efforts had often continued into early September in previous years. In 2015-2016, Music is our most heavily enrolled department, surpassing Visual Arts, which had held the top spot for three years in a row. Creative Writing, our most lightly enrolled department, continues to shrink every year.

The 2015-2016 school year has also seen a rise in the number of students declining our offer of admission. Most who declined did so because our offer of financial aid failed to meet their demands. Additionally, a large number of students declined our offer in favor of attending Walnut Hill School for the Arts, in Massachusetts. Walnut Hill may compete so successfully because it has started to offer financial aid to international students, it enjoys the prestige that has traditionally attached to East Coast boarding schools, and it now has a jazz program and, in cooperation with New England Conservatory of Music, an orchestra.

#### Financial Aid

Idyllwild Arts continues to be a tuition-dependent school which must leverage tuition discounting to meet certain pressing institutional needs, particularly for violinists, violists, oboists, male dancers, and male theatre students.

We also depend on financial aid to meet net tuition goals. For example, it may be worth dispensing \$30,000 in aid if that means adding \$30,000 to the bottom line.

International enrollment continues to rise in order to meet tuition goals. In the past year international enrollment has grown by four percent and now makes up fifty-six percent of the student population. Forty-three percent of our students are full-pay and eighty-one percent of full-pay students are international, so full-pay international students make up thirty-five percent of our student body. These numbers fluctuate from year to year, yet the trend is clearly toward greater dependence on international tuition, since our domestic applicants can pay less each year.

The fact that the U.S. dollar is now its strongest in a decade has adversely impacted our financial aid budget. We saw a steep rise in international applications for financial aid for 2015-2016, and China's devaluation of the yuan has damaged the financial capabilities of some of our families.

2. What data does the school collect and analyze with respect to such considerations as socioeconomic diversity, parental background, ethnic and racial diversity, and other factors relevant to the school's admission objectives and overall mission? Who analyzes the data, and what has been learned from that analysis?

**Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts asks students about parental employment and marital status, student citizenship, and (optionally) ethnicity. The Director of Enrollment Management analyzes this information. Most of our mission-appropriate applicants are high in financial need and come from California. The fact that we are primarily a residential school with a small day-student pool to draw from affects our international/domestic ratio.

3. Describe the policies and process by which all admission decisions are made. Who participates and at what level? Evaluate the effectiveness of this process.

**Answer:**

The admission process begins when a student submits an application, which is then examined by the Assistant Director of Admission assigned to that applicant's desired arts major. The Assistant Director helps the student and family submit audition materials, transcripts, reference letters, essays, and other supporting materials, including an English-skills assessment via Skype if English is not the applicant's first language. The Assistant Director also explains to the family how to apply for financial aid.

Once the application is complete, it is reviewed by the Chair of the appropriate arts department, the Dean of Academics, and the Director of Enrollment Management. Applicants for the twelfth grade or a postgraduate year are also reviewed by the College Counseling staff. If there are questions about admissibility, the application goes to the Admissions Committee, consisting of the Director of Enrollment Management, the Assistant Directors of Admission, the Dean of Academics, and the Dean of Students. The Financial Aid Committee, consisting of the Director of Enrollment Management, the Head of School, and the Director of Business Operations, reviews the files and financial aid applications of students judged to be admissible.

The process is effective in permitting all necessary parties to view the application and give or withhold assurance of an applicant's academic, artistic, and personal suitability for the school.

This has been the first year we were already full in June, after pushing our Priority Application Deadline forward.

4. Describe the policies and process by which all financial aid decisions are made. Who participates and at what level? Evaluate the effectiveness of this process.

**Answer:**

A domestic application for financial aid requires three steps. The first is to complete the Idyllwild Arts Academy Application for Financial Aid by supplying marital and employment information, identifying funding sources, and stating what the family believes it can pay. The next step is online completion by the family of the SSS by NAIS form, requiring submission of tax returns and

facilitating a reasonably objective determination of the family's ability to pay. Finally, the family may submit a letter of need to explain any special financial circumstances. The process permits applications from a broad range of socioeconomic backgrounds.

International applicants for financial aid complete the Idyllwild Arts Academy Application for Financial Aid and submit the letter of need. Although international applicants for financial aid who do not pay U.S. taxes cannot submit SSS by NAIS, they must provide documentation of employment, income, and assets.

Financial aid is determined by financial need, merit, and institutional need. Merit scholarships are decided by recommendation of the Arts Department Chairs, the Dean of Academics, and/or the Financial Aid Committee, and can be awarded to students who do not apply for aid.

The Director of Enrollment Management, the Head of School, and the Director of Business Operations make up the Financial Aid Committee. One of our Assistant Directors of Admission maintains the SSS by NAIS database.

5. Describe and evaluate the financial aid program in terms of adequacy of funding, long-term sustainability, and how effectively it reflects the school's values and meets near- and long-term goals.

**Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts provides financial aid to sixty percent of its student body, basing this aid on a discounted tuition rate rather than on actual scholarship funds. Sixty-five percent of applicants apply for financial aid, but the aid budget has been decreased by two percent for next year. While generous financial aid has allowed the school to meet specific institutional needs, we are working hard to enroll more full-pay domestic students. Currently, only five percent of domestic students are full-pay, and forty-five percent of domestic applicant families have an annual income of \$50,000 or less. The average full-pay family has an annual income of over \$400,000. We have had a Financial Aid wait list for the past two years.

As noted above in question 8.1, our financial aid budget is greatly affected by the exchange rate between the U.S. and the countries of our international students, provoking this year's rise in international applicants for financial aid. Steady tuition increases also produce increasing applications for financial aid. At present these trends do not imperil the school's financial health, yet the balance between domestic students and international students is moving farther away from our ideal.

We also maintain a full-tuition remission policy for admissible children of full-time employees.

Tuition Remission	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Amount Awarded	\$302,289	\$233,695	\$341,700	\$394,900	\$578,000	\$576,000
Number of Students	10	7	10	11	14	15

Last year (2014-2015) was the first year that Idyllwild Arts was not dependent on second-semester enrollment to meet net tuition goals.

6. If international students constitute a significant percentage of the enrollment, describe and evaluate the process by which they are evaluated and admitted, brought into the school, and acclimated to a new culture.

**Answer:**

**Admission & Enrollment**

The admission process for international applicants is identical to that of domestic students, as detailed above in question 3. The only extra step for international applicants requires those whose primary language is not English to be assessed via Skype to determine their English writing, speaking, listening, and reading skills. International applicants must possess English proficiency commensurate with or superior to their entering grade level (Beginner/Ninth, Intermediate/Tenth, Advanced/Eleventh, Mainstream/Twelfth). The results of an applicant's Skype interview are reported to the admissions team, the Dean of Academics, and the relevant arts department Chair.

**Acclimation**

Our comprehensive ESL Department teaches American culture as well as the English language. For new ESL students, a general orientation session conducted by ESL faculty and returning ESL students is required during arrival week. This two-hour orientation begins with small-group brainstorming questions about goals, fears, concerns, and so on, which are then shared with the larger group and addressed reassuringly by the returning students. This session is followed by an opportunity for students to devise and perform skits based on challenging cultural or social scenarios that they might face here. These serve as helpful icebreakers.

International students also benefit from our Art Buddy program, international student Prefects who help with dorm life, and a Manager of International Student Relations (formerly the Coordinator of International Student Life). The latter is crucial not only to the ESL Skype interviews and to creation of I-20's, but to communication with our international families that draws on the translating abilities and good will of a number of international parents.

Last September our international parent orientation was expanded into a full day that included a meet-and-greet breakfast and a campus tour that facilitated close interaction with faculty and administration as well as our Residential Life and Health Center staffs. A late-afternoon reception at the home of the President of Idyllwild Arts Foundation introduced new international students to their Advisors, who also had the chance to meet their advisees' parents.

We pair international students with English-speaking roommates whenever possible and celebrate our global community with a festive International Dinner and a handful of student-run cultural clubs. In addition, the ESL Department offers a six-week Summer Intensive program.

7. What are the most challenging issues in admission and enrollment, and what is being considered—or done—to address them?

**Answer:**

One of our biggest enrollment challenges is to meet net tuition goals despite our small number of full-pay domestic families. The overwhelming majority—ninety percent—of our domestic families can pay \$15,000 or less. We encounter some domestic families that can afford to pay our tuition but do not wish to; they simply do not perceive enough value in our education. These are major challenges to efforts to diversify our student body.

Our high tuition also deters some families, even making it hard to find full-pay and low-scholarship families. We try to counter this challenge with targeted marketing, travel to spread the word about the school, and offers of merit scholarships and tuition discounting. We raised tuition just two percent this school year, compared to four percent last year.

As an arts-focused, West Coast boarding school, Idyllwild Arts serves a niche market. Our West Coast location deters many East Coast families who are comfortable with boarding school culture, while the very idea of boarding school deters many West Coast families who want to keep their children close to them and can find other independent-school options. Finally, our arts focus limits our appeal to wealthier families who have specific aspirations for their children.

At present the Academy relies heavily on Chinese students to meet our tuition goals. This has created an imbalance of language groups on campus, with close to thirty percent of students speaking Mandarin as their native language. Admissions is working to correct this imbalance by tapping new international and domestic markets.

## 9. Finance

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*The school has an operating budget sufficient to carry out the school's mission, with designated sources of funds to support the school program, plant, operations, and personnel. The school's finances undergo regular review by the Board of Trustees and ensure the long-term sustainability of the institution. They are well managed by a qualified staff, appropriately documented, and in compliance with all applicable regulatory and legal requirements.*

### Context Statement for Standard

The strategic management of school finances is essential to providing a high quality educational program and to ensuring the long-term fiscal health and sustainability of the institution. Effective financial management depends on the right combination of professional expertise, well-trained personnel, appropriate policies, internal controls, complete and accurate records, compliance with IRS and other regulations, and a strong sense of fiduciary responsibility on the part of administration and the Board.

### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. The school's policies, procedures, and practices are in general compliance with the standards of the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) (<http://www.fasb.org/home>).
2. The school has written comprehensive financial policies, including those that address risk management issues.
3. The school has budget policies and practices that are consistent and well documented, and it has a documented annual operating budget, formally adopted by the Board.
4. The school has personnel specifically trained in finance, accounting, and non-profit business operations.
5. The school has regular audits or reviews in compliance with CAIS policies.
6. The school has a philosophy and practice of compensation that is effective in attracting and retaining qualified personnel.
7. Tuition, fundraising, and other revenues are sufficient to cover annual operating expenses.
8. The school has a documented, multi-year financial strategy.
9. The school has a policy and practice of building financial reserves for long-term facilities needs and unforeseen financial emergencies.

### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. The school has an annual audit or review, and an audit in the fiscal year that ends immediately before the year during which the school is to be visited by an accreditation team. Copies of all audits, reviews, and IRS Form 990s are kept on file at the school.

**Answer:** Yes

2. The school's financial policies and practices comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

**Answer:** Yes

3. Within the school's business operations there is a clear segregation of responsibilities that is understood and consistently followed.

**Answer:** Yes

4. Financial records, whether digital or paper, are secured against fire or other potential loss.

**Answer:** Yes

5. The school has written policies for the management and oversight of investments.

**Answer:** Yes

### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. Analyze and interpret the school's dashboard data that pertains to finance. What are the main findings and the chief implications for the school that emerge from examining the data?

**Answer:**

Although the Foundation is in satisfactory financial condition, we continue to seek creative ways to find new sources of revenue and expense reductions. We now collect funds for the following year earlier than we had in the past, resulting in better cash flow, and we are close to accounting fully for depreciation in our annual budget. Some five years ago we took the crucial step of adding a line item for depreciation, to which we have added \$50,000 every year. The Foundation's soon-to-be-completed five-year strategic plan will carry the school into the future.

2. What other financial data, including comparative data from other schools, has the school identified as useful in its financial management? Who analyzes the data, and what has been learned from that analysis?

**Answer:**

Careful scrutiny of Cal-ISBOA and NAIS data to see how we stand relative to other schools reveals that Idyllwild Arts Academy's financial challenges are not unique. We often refer to Cal-ISBOA and NAIS data to make sure we stay competitive in tuition, salaries, and benefits.

3. Describe the process for the preparation of the annual operating budget. In what ways does the operating budget reflect the school's mission, policies, values, and strategic priorities? What tensions, if any, does the school experience in constructing the budget?

**Answer:**

The budget takes shape on a yearly schedule. Starting in October and November, two key budget elements—salary expense increases and tuition pricing—are developed for our Board's review

and approval. The Foundation President and the Director of Business Operations analyze and recommend tuition and fee levels, salary scale increases, and enrollment and financial aid targets for the upcoming year, presenting their resulting recommendations to the Finance Committee for approval. This financial planning serves as the basis for issuing faculty contracts and determining salary increases for the coming fiscal year. These two elements of the budget are the major parameters for development of the entire budget.

In December the President consults with the Director of Business Operations and the Director of Enrollment Management to determine additional financial projections and goals for the new fiscal year that begins on July 1. In February the departments are informed that the budget is under preparation, and each department head and Dean is asked to complete a budget worksheet, calculating spending projections for the current fiscal year and forecasting operational expenses for the following fiscal year.

Gathering information is the responsibility of the Executive Team under supervision of the President. The Head of School and the Dean of Academics collect information for arts and academics, respectively; the Director of Enrollment Management for admissions; the Dean of Students for student life and health services; the Director of Marketing for the marketing unit; the Director of Programs for the Summer Program; the Director of Business Operations for finance, auxiliary services, transportation, food services, physical plant, and overhead for administration, debt servicing, and capital renewal; and the Chief Development Officer for fundraising expenses as well as projected funds-to-be-raised.

Each Executive Team member consults with faculty and staff in his or her division, making sure that basic operating needs will be met and that important improvements are proposed. The entire draft budget is compiled by the Director of Business Operations for presentation to the President. Presidential approval sends the draft budget to the Finance Committee for evaluation of the need for adjustments due to available funding or changes in financial projections. The President and the Director of Business Operations then propose the adjusted budget to the Finance Committee.

After determining whether the budget is in accord with long-term planning, the Finance Committee presents it to the Board of Governors with a recommendation for approval. Upon approval, the budget becomes the school's financial operating plan for the year.

Beginning July 1, the financial performance of each division of the school is constantly monitored against the budget. By October, the Summer Program has been completed and Academy enrollment is finalized. At that point, any shortfall by either the Summer Program or the Academy relative to its net tuition revenue goals will lead to budget revisions to be approved at the November meeting of the Board of Governors.

4. Describe and evaluate the types of insurance and coverage limits that the school now carries. In looking to the future, what changes may be necessary?

**Answer:**

Property coverage:

Philadelphia Insurance Company, 37,349,549 limit, \$25,000 deductible

Liability coverage:

Philadelphia Insurance Company, \$2,000,000 limit, \$5,000 deductible

Automobile coverage:

Philadelphia Insurance Company, \$1,000,000 limit, \$5,000 deductible

Educators' Legal Liability (including D&O):

Philadelphia Insurance Company, \$1,000,000 limit, \$5,000 deductible

Excess liability (Umbrella Coverage):

Provided by Lexington, \$10,000,000 each occurrence limit. Covers General liability, Business Auto Liability, Abuse/molestation, Employee benefits, educators legal, employment practice, directors and officers liability, employers liability, foreign liability.

Workers' compensation:

Church Mutual, \$1,000,000, deductible

Idyllwild Arts Foundation is confident that its insurance is adequate to sustain the organization even in the event of a catastrophic disaster.

5. Who reviews and evaluates the school's financial, investment, and endowment spending policies, and how often does this occur?

**Answer:**

The Finance Committee makes investment decisions regarding the endowment, and the investment policy is appended to this document. Endowment funds are invested with Capital Group Private Client Services. We currently have two funds in our endowment, one that invests in fixed income and one that invests in equities. The former represents one third of our endowment and is very conservative. The other two thirds of our endowment are in equities and therefore necessarily incur greater risk than the fixed-income investment. However, Capital Group Private Client Services specializes in serving not-for-profit organizations, and even its approach to investing in equities is conservative.

Endowment distribution for the budget period is based on five percent of the twelve-quarter trailing average, determined in December of the prior fiscal year, a prudent and widely used approach for smoothing out market fluctuations. In FY 2016 our distribution policy changes so that we can take between zero and four and a half percent of the trailing average, and up to five percent with Finance Committee approval. Since FY 2012 our endowment investment account has increased in value by approximately \$900,000.

6. Assess the effectiveness of the school's financial management policies and procedures, including the business office's use of technology and level of staffing. What is being done to correct inadequacies, if any exist?

**Answer:**

The Foundation's financial management policies have produced four consecutive clean audits, without material weaknesses or drawing on lines of credit. The Business Office uses not-for-profit accounting software called BlackBaud. We are approaching full funding of depreciation, resulting in breaking even or coming close to doing so for the last several years.



7. How is the segregation of duties and responsibilities of Business Office personnel supervised and ensured?

**Answer:**

The Accounting Office is supervised by the Controller, who reviews all journal entries, and all checks require two executive signatures. Staff charged with reconciling the bank cannot handle cash or checks, and no one with access to our accounting system is permitted to sign checks. An independent Certified Public Accountant reviews our internal controls during the annual audit.

8. How does the school ensure transparency in its financial operations, and how are school constituencies made aware of and educated about the financial condition of the school?

**Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts Foundation distributes departmental expense reports to all department heads monthly, except in July when many department heads are vacationing and the auditors are on site. From August through June, therefore, all budget managers receive monthly reports detailing precisely where they stand. Departments in charge of revenue receive monthly reports of both revenues and expenses, and the general ledger detail is distributed to departments on request. In addition, the Finance Committee receives monthly financials and makes quarterly reports of the financials to the Board of Governors. The most recent audit and the most recent IRS Form 990 are available on the organization's website.

9. What is the school's overall assessment of its financial condition, what are its greatest financial challenges, and what plans are in place to ensure the school's future sustainability?

**Answer:**

The school is satisfied with its overall financial position. Great effort is going toward creation of a five-year strategic plan, with guidance by an outside consultant and under the leadership of a number of key employees from faculty, administration, and the Board. Challenges we are determined to surmount are controlling expenses, exploring new sources of revenue while lowering financial aid as a percentage of revenue, and stabilizing the school's fiscal needs against multiple revenue variables. In keeping with the "New Normal" model espoused by NAIS, we have made a determined effort to lower our tuition increases from their historic levels.

## 10. Advancement

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*Consistent with its mission and proportional to its needs and resources, the school implements a comprehensive program of fundraising, marketing, communications, constituency support, and community relations to attain its goals and ensure its future viability.*

Context Statement for Standard

*A school's advancement program—which coordinates initiatives in fundraising, marketing, communications, and constituency relations—is essential to institutional success. Given that most schools have a significant reliance on their development efforts to help close the gap between tuition and the actual cost per student, the leadership and philanthropic capacity of the Board of Trustees play a key role in advancing the institution toward the achievement of its strategic goals, which typically require expanded funding for people, program, and plant. The advancement staff and the Head of School must also contribute crucial expertise if a school is to move forward, particularly as they position the school to improve its public relations and to secure transformational gifts.*

### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. The school has a comprehensive plan and set of strategies for its fundraising initiatives, ensuring the coordination of planning and implementation efforts to maximize support for institutional needs.
2. There are school personnel with appropriate training, developed skills, and specific responsibilities for institutional fundraising activities.
3. The school has a well planned and executed annual fund program, which draws upon Board leadership, volunteer dedication, and staff expertise to ensure high constituency participation levels and meaningful funding totals.
4. The school has a robust major gifts program, which has led to the successful identification and cultivation of donors who have the capacity to make lead gifts to the institution.
5. The school is able to raise significant amounts of money for capital and endowment campaigns.
6. A planned giving program is established, and the school has secured commitments from donors who have identified the school as a future beneficiary of their estates.
7. The school maintains positive relationships with and garners support from key constituencies, including trustees, current parents, alumni/ae, alumni/ae parents, grandparents, foundations, corporations, and friends.
8. The Advancement Office takes the lead in connecting the school with the broader community, with a particular emphasis on communications and marketing, supported by effective work with the school's website, publications, and social media.
9. The Advancement Office and Business Office work collegially and systematically on recording gift records and restrictions.

### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. The school consistently and accurately documents all gifts to the school and monitors the designated use of restricted contributions to operations and endowment.

**Answer:** Yes

### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. Analyze and interpret the school's dashboard data that pertains to fundraising. What are the main findings and the chief implications for the school that emerge from examining the data?

**Answer:**

Our charts use two different reporting methods. For the Board, the Finance Committee, and yearly budgets, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) must be used, but the Development Office also generates a report based on CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) standards for reporting and management. The GAAP presentation looks at funds available for operations during a current year, while the CASE presentation looks at all gifts raised within that year, regardless of restrictions on their use.

Idyllwild Arts Foundation's donor base and contributed income grew substantially between 2004 and 2010, when both a President and a Vice President for Advancement were securely in place. But 2010 marked the start of a time of turbulence in Foundation leadership as well as in

advancement/development efforts. Since 2010 the Development Office, weathering this storm of leadership changes, has maintained rather than increased the momentum and results of the previous six years.

While growing the total amount raised over time, the Foundation still receives a large portion of contributed income from a handful of donors, just as it did throughout the 1990's and early 2000's. The Foundation is privileged to have several extraordinary donors, but withdrawal of their support for any reason could leave us vulnerable.

Historically, the great bulk of philanthropic support for Idyllwild Arts Foundation has come from alumni of the Summer Program, not the Academy. This is largely because the Summer Program benefits from a legacy of sixty-seven years and the Academy one of fewer than thirty years. While the Development Office has worked hard for years to grow Academy alumni giving, yielding some success, absence of a solid structure to support their engagement with the school beyond giving remains a formidable obstacle to building their goodwill.

2. How does the school evaluate and, if necessary, change the "culture of giving" among trustees, current parents, alumni/ae, alumni/ae parents, and employees of the school?

**Answer:**

Changing a culture of giving takes time, and assessing the current state of that culture requires a look at giving broken down by constituencies. The Development Office is working with faculty, leadership, and other stakeholders to strengthen a sense of teamwork and collaboration.

Employees have generally participated in higher numbers over the last five years, but giving by present and past Academy parents and Academy alumni has stayed relatively flat. We think associations of parents and alumni can drive greater involvement with the school by these constituencies, and involvement drives giving. Simply asking for money more often without promoting more involvement has been ineffective. However, a Parent Association has recently been founded and is gathering momentum, while plans for an Alumni Association are taking shape.

3. Identify the roles that the administration, faculty, and trustees see themselves as having in the cultivation of potential support for the school. What education and support are provided to each group to ensure their engagement and effectiveness in these roles? Are any changes necessary?

**Answer:**

Staff and faculty naturally cultivate relationships between Idyllwild Arts Foundation and outside constituents. Excluding the President and a handful of people in leadership, staff and faculty are involved in the identification and cultivation stages only, but in the last decade our faculty and staff have become far more likely to share information, contacts, etc., with the Development Office. We believe this is due to the greater interaction between faculty and staff and the Development Office which the latter has encouraged.

Last summer the Development Office reached out to Deans and other school leaders, including Department Chairs, for meetings to talk about how Development can help them reach their goals and how they can support the Development Office. The discussions have shown promise of strengthening cooperation between Development and the rest of the organization. At the start of each school year, Development gives a presentation at faculty orientation to outline our goals for the year and our operating protocols, and to suggest ways for faculty to become involved.

Idyllwild Arts Foundation Board members have a proud history of successful fundraising. Earl Fisher was among the Board members who led early capital campaigns, and Board members actively qualified, cultivated, and solicited gifts for our new William M. Lowman Concert Hall,

although Development staff closed most of the gifts. The Board's Advancement Committee recently partnered with Development staff to lead the school's first-ever online fundraising day. This committee reports back to the Board on advancement activities.

It has been at least two years since development training was offered to the Board, but the Development Office and the Chair of the Advancement Committee are working on the possibility of offering Board training this year.

The Development Office is also looking into ways to accommodate willingness by some faculty members to contribute to advancement efforts.

4. Assess the ways in which the school maintains contact and builds relationships with alumni/ae, engages them with regard to the advancement objectives of the school, and cultivates them as potential future donors.

**Answer:**

In 2015-2016 we shall form the Idyllwild Arts Alumni Association with key help from our Alumni Trustees. The Alumni Association will aim to foster lifelong relationships with Idyllwild Arts, cultivate reciprocally beneficial relationships for alumni and students, provide networking opportunities to alumni, support the school financially, and promote alumni engagement.

Idyllwild Arts currently hosts annual Alumni Reunions in Idyllwild, Los Angeles, New York City, San Francisco, Chicago, Tokyo, Japan, Taipei, and Seoul. Alumni are also solicited to represent Idyllwild Arts for the Admission Office at school fairs throughout the United States and Asia, and alumni have served as translators at recent Parent Receptions and school fairs in Beijing, Taipei, Seoul, and Bangkok.

Alumni often return to campus to perform, teach masterclasses, speak to the Life Skills class, speak as part of our new Art in Society program, serve as Alumni Trustees on our Board, or simply to visit.

Alumni took part in the recent capital campaign for the William M. Lowman Concert Hall, and they give to the annual fund and to special funds such as the Alumni Scholarship Fund (to which two hundred and twenty alumni have donated). Though alumni giving is growing, it continues to represent a very small portion of the income contributed to Idyllwild Arts Foundation.

Alumni are also returning to perform in the Alumni Orchestra Concert and the Alumni Jazz Concert in the spring of 2016.

5. Assess the Board's effectiveness in leading the school's fundraising efforts through their own contributions of major and other gifts and through their involvement in the cultivation and solicitation of other donors.

**Answer:**

In the last five years, Board giving has represented forty-two percent of all giving to the Foundation. Even more striking, Board members contributed eighty-two percent of the \$6.35 million raised for the William M. Lowman Concert Hall between 2010 and 2013. It is also notable that our Board does not seem to be exempt from fundraising's "80/20 rule": while almost all Board members give, a substantial portion of Board gifts come from a handful of individuals.

Our Board members have always been outstanding “friend-raisers.” They often host dinners, receptions, and other events designed to raise the profile of Idyllwild Arts and attract new supporters. For example, a Jazz and Cocktails event at a Board member’s home in May 2015 raised more than \$10,000. The event yielded some dramatically high-profile new connections for Idyllwild Arts, and a Board member covered all expenses.

Board members helped cultivate and solicit donors during the capital campaign for the William M. Lowman Concert Hall, although most funds were given by Board members themselves.

The current Chair of the Board’s Advancement Committee believes that much work remains to be done to involve Board members in fundraising. While participation in the recent capital campaign was strong, we seek greater participation in our ongoing annual fund efforts.

6. What steps has the school taken to identify, research, cultivate, and solicit donors with the capacity to make gifts of such magnitude that the school’s plans, facilities, programs, financial aid resources, or endowment could be transformed?

**Answer:**

At least twice a year the Development Office screens the records of parents, alumni, friends, etc., for markers of capacity and inclination to give, feeding all promising leads to gift officers for evaluation and follow-up. Working with the President, the Chief Development Officer, supported by her staff, initiates new relationships with high-profile individuals, corporations, foundations, and other potential supporters.

At present we have several prospects in the pipeline with the ability to make transformative gifts (\$1 million or more) to Idyllwild Arts. Cultivating these relationships is vital, since our current pool of donors of \$100,000 or more per year is small. Our pipeline is fed constantly by Development Office data and screening, contacts and friends of Board members, institutional partnerships, emerging successful alumni, etc.

President Pamela Jordan leads the initiative for Idyllwild Arts Foundation’s seventieth anniversary, climaxing in a special celebration Gala in Los Angeles in April 2016. The event is designed to build strategic partnerships, increase contributed support, and attract mission-appropriate students. The Development Office regards the seventieth anniversary as an excellent opportunity to attract new supporters. In particular, we see the Gala as giving a powerful boost to our rising visibility in Los Angeles.

7. Describe and analyze the scope and effectiveness of the school’s marketing and communications efforts. What conclusions can be drawn and what do these conclusions suggest should be the school’s future priorities in this area?

**Answer:**

Current Idyllwild Arts marketing and communications efforts target a domestic audience across a wide range of platforms, including print advertising in national and regional publications and digital advertising by website banners, E-newsletters, and email blasts.

We now use many social media platforms to engage with age- and mission-appropriate students. While “quick” platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat have proved useful for initial contact, deeper platforms such as Facebook, Blogspot, and Medium enable meaningful and lasting conversation with potential students.

Our website, [idyllwildarts.org](http://idyllwildarts.org), received twelve thousand more unique visitors in the first six months of 2015 than in the final six months of 2014. The visits originated overwhelmingly in the U.S., and especially from the West Coast.

With the possibility of economic worries looming for international families, particularly from Asia, our push for more domestic students seems to be gaining traction.

Marketing efforts will continue to focus on domestic families, while exploring emerging international markets identified by our Admission Office.

8. Describe and evaluate the school's community relations activities with respect to such entities as other schools, neighborhood associations, and governmental officials (e.g., planning commissioners, city council members, city staff, etc.).

**Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts maintains highly positive relationships with our local community. Through organizations that include Associates of Idyllwild Arts Foundation, Art Alliance of Idyllwild, Rotary Club of Idyllwild, and the local public elementary school, as well as through weekly advertising in the local Town Crier newspaper, we communicate regularly about our current and upcoming activities.

Social media and organizational partnerships help us communicate with the neighboring desert communities and beyond.

9. Based on the responses to the questions above, what would the school identify as the two or three biggest issues that it currently faces with respect to advancement?

**Answer:**

The three biggest issues we have identified are: 1) scarcity of donors and challenges to recruiting and retaining donors at or above the \$100,000 level, 2) low levels of Academy alumni giving to and engagement with Idyllwild Arts, and 3) a small endowment

Issue 1: Since its founding, Idyllwild Arts has relied on a handful of major donors for a large portion of contributed annual income. Our good luck in benefiting from their generosity and loyalty is at the same time a vulnerability: were they to drop away and not be replaced right away, as much as \$1 million of annual operating income could be lost. Idyllwild Arts continues to see substantial growth in its donor base, especially at the \$1,000-plus level. Yet new donors of \$100,000 or more are needed not only for sustenance, but for growth and to support new initiatives emerging from the strategic planning process or from the President and the Board.

The Development Office is moving decisively to address our shortage of major donors. A new Chief Development Officer is working with her staff and the President on immediate purposeful engagement with potential new major funders and institutional partners. Early indications suggest that a handful of prospects may become donors of \$100,000-plus within the next two years. In addition, our Major Gifts Manager is working with a consultant to strengthen and implement a new operating plan. Finally, the Director of Development is working with a consultant to introduce a new planned giving initiative in 2015-2016. The latter's success would increase the size of our endowment and thus substantially offset annual operating costs.

Issue 2: In comparison with similar schools, alumni involvement and giving have always been weak at Idyllwild Arts. We believe several factors account for this: our geographic isolation makes

visiting and engaging difficult; students attending Idyllwild Arts cannot connect the fundraising messages they hear with what they observe; millennials increasingly distrust institutions and, more and more conceiving of philanthropic activity as ideally carried out at the grassroots level, insist on directing their donations specifically; and Idyllwild Arts lacks a structure to support alumni engagement, not only by monetary giving but by other means.

We are addressing these issues in four important ways. First, the Alumni Trustee program, introduced a few years ago, aims to develop future alumni leaders and increase involvement; we now have six Alumni Trustees. Second, several key alumni leaders are working with Idyllwild Arts leadership and staff to build the structure for an Alumni Association, whose value will lie in facilitating the alumni involvement with students, projects, career resources, etc., that is a precursor to giving financial support. Third, the Development Office has devised and promoted ways to support the kind of specifically directed giving that has become so popular, including the Alumni Scholarship Fund, whose launch more than doubled our previous single-year record for contributing alumni. Fourth, programs such as the Arts Enterprise Laboratory regularly bring alumni to campus for masterclasses, semester-long internships, and more.

Issue 3: Idyllwild Arts Foundation's \$6 million endowment can supply only seven percent of the annual income needed to close the gap between operating cost and tuition-generated revenue. While capital campaigns have focused on buildings and infrastructure, there has never been a coordinated and sustained effort to raise large funds for the endowment, and lack of a proactive planned giving program has contributed to keeping the endowment small. We have received a number of planned gifts, but many owed nothing to our own marketing efforts. Furthermore, some were released for general operations, to which an unrestricted bequest may go in its entirety, since the Board has no mechanism to place all or some of the gift into the endowment.

We have a three-part plan to address the vulnerability of our endowment. First, our strategic planning process is likely to yield a recommendation for endowment growth, possibly through capital campaigns. Second, the Director of Development is working with a recognized consultancy firm on a program for marketing and soliciting planned gifts. And third, the Board's Advancement Committee has worked with Development staff, other Board leaders, and an independent firm to revise our gift acceptance policy. The proposed revision stipulates that the whole of any unrestricted realized bequest would be invested into a quasi-endowment. The latter operates like a normal endowment, except that the Board may pull funds out of principal in case of financial hardship. The Advancement Committee has approved this policy, which now awaits approval by the full Board.

## IV: Operations

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### 11. Human Resources

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*The school maintains positive working conditions, fair and consistent personnel policies—including hiring and evaluation practices—and appropriate compensation. A collaborative culture with open communication is fostered to create an optimal environment for the community of the school.*

#### Context Statement for Standard

The school's faculty, administrators, and support staff all play essential roles in the school's ongoing efforts to offer an engaging learning environment for the students. Independent schools pride themselves on the adults they employ, seeing all as important teachers, mentors, and role models for students. Sustainable schools have in place policies and procedures to maintain work environments that simultaneously meet or exceed legal mandates, make employees feel recognized and valued, inspire employees with respectful and meaningful performance feedback, provide opportunities for input during the school's deliberations, and offer ongoing professional development options. Schools that are dedicated to creating and sustaining such environments optimize the potential for their students and community members.

#### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. The school has an effective employee organizational structure for achieving the school's mission, carrying out school policy, and conducting the program of the school.
2. The school has a published employee handbook or personnel policies manual that is provided to all employees.
3. Salaries and benefits are sufficiently competitive with local region peer independent schools—as well as other private and public schools—to attract and retain qualified personnel.
4. Employee benefits are understood by employees and meet all legal requirements and regulations.
5. There is a sufficient number of administrators, faculty, and staff to carry out the program of the school, to ensure the supervision, safety, and health of the students, and to maintain financial sustainability.
6. The school ensures that all assignments for faculty and staff are appropriate in terms of their education, training, and experience.
7. There are structured opportunities for faculty and staff to be appropriately involved in institutional planning and decision-making.
8. There is an understood process for employees to express work-related concerns to their supervisor or other appropriate school personnel.
9. There are regularly accessible and funded opportunities for the continuing professional education of employees.
10. A regular employee evaluation process is consistent, well defined, and broadly understood and supported by the those who work at the school.
11. Decisions affecting the faculty and staff are consistent with the school's own employee handbook and written personnel policies.
12. The school's recruitment and employment policies and practices are consistent with all applicable labor laws and regulations, and they comply with the CAIS Code of Ethics for Employment and the Fundamental Membership Requirements.
13. Supportive, professional working conditions and clear, transparent decision-making and communications contribute to positive employee morale.
14. Administration, faculty, and staff derive a strong sense of self-efficacy and satisfaction from their work in the school.



### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. The school maintains an organizational chart or some other written document that clearly delineates reporting relationships at the school.

**Answer:** Yes

2. The school has written job descriptions that clearly delineate the responsibilities for each position.

**Answer:** Yes

3. Fully consistent with the CAIS Code of Ethics for Employment the school has appropriate guidelines to assure non-discrimination in hiring, and it publishes its non-discrimination policy.

**Answer:** Yes

4. The school undertakes and documents a process of performance evaluation of all employees.

**Answer:** Yes

5. The school complies with applicable local, state, and federal labor laws and regulations.

**Answer:** Yes

6. Personnel records for all employees are securely maintained.

**Answer:** Yes

### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. Since the last accreditation team visit, what new needs have come into focus, and what changes have occurred to the school's personnel organizational structure? What factors have led to these changes? What impact have these changes had on the school and its students?

**Answer:**

Our major restructuring has been in upper administration. In 2013, after extensive study (see Chapter 16, question 1), it was decided to hire a Foundation President with responsibility for moving the institution as a whole forward. A Head of School would oversee the Academy's day-to-day operations. The Head of School, the Director of the Summer Program, the Director of Marketing, the Director of Business Operations, the Chief Advancement Officer, and the Director of Human Resources would report directly to the President.

The President quickly changed this structure. The former Dean of Admission was moved from reporting to the Head of School to reporting to the President, gaining the new title of Director of Enrollment Management and assuming responsibility for enrollment for the entire institution, including the Summer Program. This was in response to a need for closer integration and collaboration in admission and enrollment across the institution. The Director of Human Resources was moved to report to the Director of Business Operations. Finally, the longtime Director of the Summer Program retired and that position was reframed as Director of Programs, which will eventually include other programs outside of the Academy.

These changes have begun the work of uniting the Academy, the Summer Program, and other programs under a single vision and mission.

In the spring of 2015, the Head of School reorganized the Academy's structure so that the heads of all nine of its programs report to him: Academics, Student Life, Creative Writing, Dance, Film and Digital Media, InterArts/Fashion Design, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts.

The organization has gradually introduced more diversity and experience across its departments, doing its best to avoid the jarring dislocations caused by sudden change while giving to faculty, staff, and students the sense of reassurance that accompanies the visibility of strong professionalism. Faculty and staff see that a higher level of professionalism is expected, and this in turn raises the bar for the students.

2. What are the benefits policies that are in place to attract, retain, develop, and support employees (e.g., sick leave, sabbaticals, innovation grants, etc.)? Assess the effectiveness of current policies in meeting the objectives of the school in this area.

**Answer:**

The school offers its employees a competitive medical benefits package, sick pay, vacations, housing (when available) for faculty and appropriate staff, a retirement plan with significant matching contributions by the organization and credit for experience with other educational institutions, and assistance for those who wish to further their education. While funding for summer sabbaticals is offered through the professional development process, year-long and semester-long sabbatical opportunities were removed from the operating budget during the 2009-2010 school year.

Greater attention to providing competitive benefits and salaries has helped reduce what had been high turnover rates in both faculty and dorm staff.

3. How does the school assess its effectiveness in identifying and hiring qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds? What are the findings from this assessment, and what changes, if any, does the school want to implement in this area in the future?

**Answer:**

Hiring practices have not prioritized diversity. The school has always sought the most complete accomplishments in relevant subject areas for arts, academic, and administrative positions, but highly accomplished candidates willing to join a boarding community in an isolated rural environment can be hard to find. We should nevertheless strive to find candidates of color, as well as of ethnic backgrounds more reflective of our student population.

We have listed openings with Carney Sandoe and CalWest to cast a wide net for diverse and highly accomplished candidates, although recruiting for arts disciplines typically requires a more targeted approach through trade journals, professional organizations, and arts networks.

International searches could expand our hiring pools, but immigration and visa requirements have proven cost-prohibitive in hiring and retaining international faculty.

4. How effectively is the current employee performance evaluation process working in promoting positive change and growth? What, if anything, in this area would benefit from review and possible change?

**Answer:**

The current annual performance review with one's supervisor encourages open discussion of goal-setting and other means of promoting professional growth. Yet the process would benefit from improved managerial communication of expectations, and training has been set up so that managers can address the communication issue.

The process of individual faculty review undergoes continual evaluation and improvement, and confidential, online student surveys are being developed. (See Chapter 4, questions 6 and 10, for more about faculty evaluation.) We also need to improve our retention of performance evaluations.

5. What are the school's greatest challenges in the area of human resources, and how will the school attempt to address them?

**Answer:**

Human Resources must increase its meetings with employees, besides looking at other ways to tell them about how Human Resources can help them. We must also increase the formalization of Human Resources practices.

6. Analyze and interpret the school's dashboard data that pertains to personnel. What are the main findings, and what conclusions does the school draw about its personnel practices, compensation program, and staffing structure? What are the chief implications for the school that emerge from examining the data?

**Answer:**

This answer is in response to the manual question number 1:

Effective, consistent personnel practices are an ongoing priority. A recent organizational restructuring wherein Human Resources now reports directly to the Office of Business Operations has permitted analysis and revision of several personnel practices. We have reviewed and revised onboarding and offboarding policies in order to establish greater consistency. We also attend carefully to labor law and independent school best practices. Human Resources needs to increase faculty and staff awareness of resources for additional training and for obtaining more and clearer benefits information.

Compensation was reviewed in 2013, leading to the draft of a compensation scale that takes meticulous account of education, experience, and work in the field. Ultimately, the school could not fully implement the scale's monetary recommendations. We have worked to satisfy the Compensation Committee's desire to tie evaluation to compensation. A new compensation system has been drafted which includes bands of compensation reflective of faculty members' entire contributions to the school. It is currently under review by the President and the Board Chair, and faculty and staff have expressed interest in making the review an ongoing one, based on input from a broad range of constituents. An analysis presented to the Board and faculty early in 2015 showed that our faculty compensation matches the median for all CAIS day and boarding schools.

Ongoing review of staffing structure in the last three years has led to the creation of some new positions but also, in other cases, consolidation. An ad hoc task force on institutional spending practices has identified personnel staffing as a major area of consideration. We must determine whether we have the best, most effective organizational structure, staffing, and distribution of labor across the institution, or whether we could increase efficiency by reorganizing or consolidating.

A major challenge lies in staffing two full-time faculties, one for academics and one for the arts. Another challenge, from the standpoint of finances as well as personnel, is managing our many part-time teachers.

Our chief finding is that we need to gather all Human Resources information in one place to facilitate smooth employee access to their files, payroll information, and benefits information. We are doing this gradually and will soon achieve the goal.

## 12. Facilities: Buildings and Grounds

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*The physical plant supports and enhances the mission of the school and enables the school to implement its program effectively. The physical plant is a safe, well maintained, secure, and healthful*

*environment for students and adults. The school is regularly attentive to the physical plant, creating and executing plans for the current maintenance and future development of the facilities in support of the mission and programs.*

#### Context Statement for Standard

The physical plant has both tangible and intangible influences on teaching and learning, faculty and student morale, enrollment and retention, and school climate and culture. A well maintained, safe, up-to-date, and appropriately sized physical plant is crucial to the educational program. The effective physical plant supports student learning, provides a sense of place, and is reflective of the qualities of community that the school hopes to embody.

#### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. Instructional facilities—including space, furnishings, and areas for recreation and play—are age-appropriate and support the educational program.
2. Sufficient personnel and financial resources are devoted to plant maintenance and repair.
3. The school engages in a comprehensive, long-term facilities planning process on a regular basis and has a published plan for the renewal, repair, and replacement of the facilities.
4. The school complies with applicable local, state, and federal requirements for such considerations as fire, health, safety, access, sanitation, toxic substances, and emergency preparedness.
5. Independent of regulatory requirements, the school itself has a process for the identification and reporting of unsafe or problematic conditions in the physical plant.
6. The school has comprehensive emergency plans and regularly reviews its safety procedures.
7. The school manages its traffic and parking in ways that are controlled, safe, and respectful of the surrounding community.
8. There is appropriate signage on campus so that personnel, students, and visitors feel welcomed and are able to navigate the campus safely and easily.
9. The school mitigates its environmental impact, with ongoing efforts aimed at measurable reductions in energy use, water consumption, and waste production.
10. There is a reporting process in place to address needed repairs, safety issues, and maintenance concerns with regard to the physical plant.

#### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. The school complies with applicable local, state, and federal codes and regulations with respect to health, building, and safety considerations, including access for persons with disabilities.

**Answer:** Yes

2. The school maintains records of all relevant inspection reports from local authorities (e.g., fire department, health department, etc.).

**Answer:** Yes

#### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. What are the school's overall strengths with regard to the physical plant, and how has the school made efficient and creative use of space in meeting its needs?

**Answer:**

Our hard-working maintenance and housekeeping employees are the physical plant's greatest strength. Our Physical Plant Manager of more than thirty years supervises seventeen full-time and two part-time workers who are responsible for daily maintenance and repair of all facilities.

They also convert campus facilities from Academy use to Summer Program use during two weeks in June, and then from Summer Program use to Academy use during two weeks in August, and they support the annual Jazz in the Pines Festival on campus during the latter transitional period.

Most campus buildings were built before 1980 for the Idyllwild Arts Summer Program, whose participants range from five years old to eighty. The full-time physical plant staff maintains all buildings. After establishment in 1997 of the first Master Plan, the campus building portfolio grew to include housing and improved teaching, performance, and meeting spaces designed to support both the Summer Program and the Academy. Facilities are designated as follows:

- Academic Classroom Facilities
- Arts Classroom Facilities
- Performance Spaces
- Lecture/Meeting Facilities
- Housing Facilities
- Support Facilities

Efficient use of space is reflected in the aforementioned use of facilities by both the Academy and the Summer Program. During the Academy year, arts and academics share spaces.

We have a history of effective repurposing of space as new buildings become available. A recent example was the conversion of the old Health Center into two new classrooms upon occupation of the new LEED-certified Health Center in 2014.

2. What are the school's needs and challenges regarding the physical plant in terms of the stated mission of the school and its programs, and how are those needs and challenges currently addressed?

**Answer:**

The campus employs a full maintenance and housekeeping staff which, under the Plant Manager's direction, is responsible for daily care of facilities and grounds. Strategic decisions have been made in recent years to create a deferred maintenance budget, but the financial resources available to plant for daily operations remain less than optimum.

There is clear need for a larger operating budget for the physical plant, for which resources were drastically restricted during the economic crisis. Maintaining a balanced budget and allocating additional resources to the physical plant are ongoing concerns.

The rising enrollment of the last six years has stretched our spaces to the maximum in terms of both size and number. Construction of the new concert hall has put two classrooms out of use and produced a domino effect on other spaces.

A serious constraint that we face is the ability to obtain water permits, which is a potential obstacle to any future building projects. The current strategic planning process will address these needs in more detail and assess priorities.

3. Are there any current plans for the further development of the campus? If so, describe the school's vision, and describe the factors that might affect the implementation of these plans.

**Answer:**

The campus Master Plan for building projects, last revised in 2012, has been approved by the Riverside County Planning Commission. All capital projects are donor-funded. The appended

flowchart explains the approval process to move forward with fundraising and/or construction for any building project. Our committee notes that the Board and staff are familiar with the Master Plan, but we suggest posting it for faculty and students so they can become familiar with the process to prioritize projects, as well as the process to introduce new projects for approval.

Deferred maintenance is handled separately from capital building projects, since the former is funded through the operational budget. For budgetary purposes, we recognize the line item budgeted for depreciation as representing cash reserves earmarked for deferred maintenance.

Projects are expensed through the operational budget and, depending on the nature of the project, typically capitalized at year-end.

Deferred maintenance projects are reviewed during the annual budget process and priorities are determined by the Director of Business Operations, the Plant Manager, and the Building and Grounds Committee of the Board of Governors. Cost and schedule fall under the operational budget and donor funding does not apply. The Office of Business Operations, Plant and Project Management, and the Building and Grounds Committee of the Board of Governors annually review and update a multi-year plan for deferred maintenance.

The campus Master Plan calls for extensive new construction of donor-funded capital projects.

Construction and/or renovation of housing facilities may be more crucial to addressing concerns of prospective parents and improving student retention, but improving existing teaching facilities and adding new ones remain top priorities. The primary factors affecting completion of any capital building project are the need for donor funding and local jurisdiction permit issues.

Because of the drought the local water agency no longer allows water meter issuance, which is needed to obtain a building permit.

[Master Plan Approved 2012.pdf](#)

[Approvals Flowchart.pdf](#)

[Campus Renewal by Facility.pdf](#) also known as Deferred Maintenance Schedule

4. Evaluate the adequacy of plant maintenance, including such factors as the custodial care, staffing, and financial resources allocated to it.

**Answer:**

Working within the recognized budgetary constraints, the physical plant provides the support that is adequate to serve the campus community. Under the supervision of the Director of Business Operations, the Plant Office also manages and maintains all local, county, and federal protocols for health and safety, fire, sanitation, and hazardous waste.

The direct user reports unsafe or problematic conditions to the Plant Administrative Assistant by an email work request (further detailed below in Standard 10). Our committee proposes improving follow-up and communication by designating a representative or point person from Student Services to serve as liaison to plant. We suggest that the Plant Administrative Assistant should provide electronically to this point person alone a work order log/update for follow-up on the status of all requests, instead of following up with the individuals who submit the requests.

The point person would then be responsible for communicating the status of ongoing work during regular faculty or dorm meetings.

The Academy has a published *Disaster Preparedness Plan and Manual*, maintained by the Dean of Students and reviewed and distributed to faculty and staff at the beginning of each Academy year, during which evacuation drills are held at least twice. After the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings, the school invested in its first campus-wide communication system, enabling contact with all classrooms and offices from a communication center in the Academy administration building (Log Lodge).

[Academy Emergency Procedures.pdf](#)

The Summer Program maintains a separate protocol because of its much larger number of participants. The Summer Program plan and protocols (appended) are maintained by the Director of Programs and are communicated to staff before the Summer Program begins.

Summer Emergency Procedures.pdf

5. What approach has the school taken to address environmental sustainability with regard to buildings and grounds? What specific measures have been implemented, and what additional initiatives, if any, are contemplated—particularly with regard to measurable reductions in energy use, water consumption, and waste production? What impact have such initiatives had on the school's finances?

**Answer:**

In 2011, Idyllwild Arts Foundation employed a Sustainability Consultant and established five distinct subcommittees (Fuel and Energy, Recycling, Curriculum and Education, Food and Water, and Marketing) to address energy use, water consumption, waste production, recycling, and ongoing education. This was part of a campus-wide awareness program designed to target areas of the organization that needed improvement.

The process led to several recommendations and projects aimed at reducing our carbon footprint. Improvements included construction of our new LEED-certified Health Center equipped with solar panels, a campus-wide lighting retrofit, and food service protocols to include local food sources. Student involvement and education in carbon-use reduction are ongoing. This year the Academy has introduced several courses that address global and local sustainability.

Initial investment in these sustainability efforts did not adversely affect our finances. We procured donor funding for the engineering and installation of the Health Center's solar panels, and we applied to Southern California Edison programs to fund an energy audit and a campus lighting retrofit. We continue to promote awareness of environmental sustainability within the campus community through subject-specific coursework.

From FY 2009 through FY 2013 we saw a savings in our electricity costs of eleven percent, in our propane costs of thirty-five percent, and in our water costs of five percent. In FY 2012 alone we saw a year-over-year reduction of twelve percent (\$72,000) in overall utilities costs, with utilities savings from FY 2011 through FY 2013 totaling more than \$150,000.

Sustainability Report

6. Based on the responses to the questions above, what does the school envision as the two or three most important areas that it should address with respect to the physical plant?

**Answer:**

1. To increase the operational budget for the physical plant and improve communication between the physical plant and the campus community. This applies to work orders as well as to the campus improvement plan.
2. To evaluate comprehensively the adequacy of our educational spaces to twenty-first-century learning needs.

3. To improve dormitory facilities, especially those of Small Dorms.
4. To reconvene the Sustainability subcommittees or revisit their work.

## 13. Health, Safety, and Wellness

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*The school has established and effectively implemented policies and procedures that promote the health and ensure the safety of students and adults on campus and at off-campus school events. The school complies with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements in this regard, and it takes responsibility for educating community members and for promoting policies, habits, and practices that encourage and sustain individual and community wellness.*

### Context Statement for Standard

For schools to be successful in fostering growth and learning, they must make the health and safety of the students and adults in their on-campus communities a top priority. Accordingly, health, safety, and wellness provisions are an essential component of a school's operations, and they convey important messages about a school's values and purpose. At a minimum, each school needs to maintain consistent compliance with local, state, and federal health and safety codes and regulations. Beyond that, every school must devote itself to sustaining an environment that strongly supports the physical and emotional health and safety of its community members.

### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. All employees understand that the supervision of students to ensure their safety is a priority in all on-campus and school-related settings at all times.
2. The school has written procedures to deal with injury and illness that are distributed to and clearly understood by school personnel, parents, and students.
3. The school provides adequate instruction and supervision to reduce hazards to health and safety.
4. Adequate provisions are made for the health care and safety of students while involved in school activities on and off campus.
5. Sufficient resources, both human and financial, are allocated to the essential work of maintaining the health and safety of students.
6. The school provides a health insurance program for its employees, and it creates a work environment that actively promotes wellness for the members of the faculty, administration, and staff.
7. There is a regular, systematic review of safety procedures and practices.
8. The school is in full compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal safety and health codes and regulations.

### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school. Please note that the checklist for this section is not intended to be inclusive of all legal and regulatory requirements that a given school may need to adhere to. Each school has the responsibility to confer with its legal counsel for professional guidance and advice regarding requirements that are applicable to its own situation.*

1. The school has a sufficient number of employees who maintain current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid certifications, and up-to-date records of these certifications are kept on file at the school.

**Answer:** Yes



2. All students have been fully immunized for poliomyelitis; diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis; measles, mumps, and rubella; hepatitis b; varicella; and any other disease for which the California Department of Public Health requires immunization for school attendance.

**Answer:** Yes

3. The school has policies and procedures in place concerning the release of children to the correct legally designated adults.

**Answer:** Yes

4. Food services, if available, are inspected and licensed.

**Answer:** Yes

5. For schools with food service employees, there are written policies—provided to appropriate staff—governing the handling, preparation, and distribution of food.

**Answer:** Yes

6. There are adequate provisions for the health, care, and safety of students while involved in off-campus school activities.

**Answer:** Yes

7. The school has documented policies and procedures for dispensing medications and prescription medicines to students.

**Answer:** Yes

8. The following documents are available for review by members of the Visiting Committee during their visits to the school:

**Answer:** Yes

9. County health department kitchen inspection permit (if applicable)

**Answer:** Yes

10. CPR certifications

**Answer:** Yes

11. Immunization records

**Answer:** Yes

12. Student emergency authorization forms

**Answer:** Yes

13. List of student health concerns

**Answer:** Yes

14. First aid procedures

**Answer:** Yes

15. Medical release forms (for athletics and other physical activities)

**Answer:** Yes

16. Parent authorization forms (for field trips and school activities)

**Answer:** Yes

17. Bloodborne pathogens plan

**Answer:** Yes

18. Student and adult accident report forms

**Answer:** Yes

19. Sexual abuse policy

**Answer:** Yes

20. Harassment policy

**Answer:** Yes

21. The school is in full compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal safety and health codes and regulations.

**Answer:** Yes

Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. In light of the legal and regulatory considerations raised in the Baseline Requirements Checklist for Standard 13, what has the school learned about itself with regard to health, safety, and wellness policies and practices? What possibilities or priorities for change come out of this review?

**Answer:**

Using the school Health Center's technology, Idyllwild Arts keeps charts on every student, complete with Consent to Treat, full immunization records, in-house and clinic visit documentation, medication log and history, and allergy/condition information. Our new LEED-certified Health Center provides comfort, privacy, and state-of-the-art facilities to care for and educate our students about health-related matters.

We constantly look for best practices and tailor our systems to include them. Health Center employees stay current in licensing and professional development in nursing care, counseling, administration, medication administration, and state and county requirements.

We are committed to more frequent meetings of the newly reconstituted Safety Committee, comprised of the Dean of Students, the Director of Student Services, the Health Center Coordinator/Lead Nurse, the Director of Business Operations, the Human Resources Manager, and the Plant Manager. Our remoteness necessitates monitoring and expanding our systems for responding to catastrophic disasters, whether natural or otherwise

Our committee suggests building on the dining hall's laudable commitment to nutrition by offering healthier snacks in the campus bookstore and dormitory vending machines. We do not offer caffeinated beverages in the dorms, but they are available in the bookstore along with processed snack foods.

2. What steps has the school taken to establish and effectively implement policies and procedures that promote and ensure the safety of, respect for, and inclusion of students and adults on campus? How effective are these policies and procedures with regard to such issues as harassment, bullying, racial and cultural prejudice, gender bias, and discrimination based on sexual orientation? What data does the school have to support its conclusions about the extent to which students and adults feel safe in the school?

**Answer:**

Individual counseling is offered to all students and staff and faculty members for any reason. In counseling they can discuss any of the above issues, and they can refer someone they are concerned about for counseling.

The counselors and other specialists provide in-services, schedule educational events, and follow a Residential Life curriculum that covers bullying, gender bias, harassment, cultural differences, healthy versus unhealthy relationships, etc. Human Resources provides training in cultural sensitivity and in awareness of sexual harassment and discrimination. Support is also available through programming and student clubs, including Peer Ears, Gender Equality Club, and the Gender Sexuality Alliance.

A recent audit by an independent consultant supplies data about the level at which students say they feel safe here. Feeling safe scores among the highest categories of satisfaction for both students and their parents. Idyllwild Arts never tolerates harassment, bullying, racial or cultural prejudice, gender bias, or discrimination based on sexual orientation. Students choose the school partly because they know it is a safe and inclusive environment. From their earliest experiences of the enrollment process and consistently thereafter, students learn that acceptance of others' differences is central to Idyllwild Arts, where we celebrate these differences.

[Handbook.CurriculumGuide15.16.pdf](#)

Health Center Policy & Procedures - on file in the Health Center for further review

Dorm Office First Aid books - on file in Dorm Offices for further review

Dorm Parent Reference Guide- [Dorm Parent Ref Guide.pdf](#)

3. Describe and assess the school's efforts to educate constituents with respect to practices that promote the health and wellness of the students, as well as of the adults who work on their behalf at the school.

**Answer:**

Counseling is available to all students, staff, and faculty. Peer Ears is an open-process group for students that covers topics such as bullying, stress, self-care, healthy communication and healthy boundaries, coping mechanisms both positive (exercise, diet, music and other art, seeking support, etc.), and negative (drugs, avoidance, physical violence, etc.), eating disorders and other disorders, and overall health. A Wellness Group for students focuses on decreasing anxiety and stress, and a Help Yo' Self group focuses on developing skills and tools to cope with troubling emotions, behaviors, and situations in healthy ways. An eating disorders group supports students who struggle in this way, and a yoga class is offered to students, staff, and faculty.

Every student takes the Life Skills class, where practical topics of successful living are explored. These may include, for example, obtaining financing for higher education; building a resume or website; finding an apartment and paying for it; preparing for a job interview; or working collaboratively with others to develop an idea or product. The Residential Life Curriculum addresses topics such as drugs and alcohol, sex education, bullying, nutrition, stress management, roommate norms, communication, cultural differences, sleep, and hygiene by relating these topics to the students' lives and offering useful advice in all these areas.

Any student who admits to using or having used illegal drugs or alcohol and who wishes to stop, may go to any of the following people in order to be placed on the Health Track: a nurse, a counselor, any administrator on call, the Dean of Students, or the Director of Student Services. The course of action on the Health Track replaces any disciplinary action towards the student for behavior prior to the time he or she came forward, and it is meant to promote an atmosphere of honesty and trust within our community. The Health Track may also be utilized by students, or by friends of students, in cases of tobacco use or other health-related issues, such as self-injurious behavior.

A student placed on Health Track will assume full personal responsibility for all future behaviors.

The student will be evaluated by a healthcare professional who will make a recommendation to the Dean of Students regarding the most appropriate medical and administrative support system for the student, as well as specific conditions by which the student will be expected to abide. A contract is drawn up and agreed upon by all parties to reflect the necessary process. The Health Track is a collaborative, caring program between the Health Center, Student Services, and the student and his or her parents and advisor.

Students, staff, and faculty are also welcome to participate in our Art in Society programming, which addresses social justice and the ways in which art intersects with current cultural issues.

At the beginning of the school year, Dorm Parents and faculty are educated in recognizing signs that a student may be engaging in unhealthy behavior, and in our response protocol.

Dorm Parent and faculty training and the other groups and procedures mentioned above have helped the entire school community understand better how to improve the health and safety of everyone on campus.

Because a healthy diet is so vital to health, we continue to expand our offerings to students with food allergies, as well as other dietary restrictions, and to improve food quality in other ways.

Improvements include:

- The eggs cooked to order several mornings each week come from cage-free chickens which are humanely raised on a local farm.
- Milk served in the dining hall is hormone-free.
- The dining hall regularly serves high-quality antibiotic-free chicken.

We are also moving ahead with offerings of seafood that are strictly Marine Stewardship Council-certified (<https://www.msc.org/>).

Frequent email reminders of these and other upgrades in our food quality go out to the entire school community.

4. Describe and evaluate the programs that are offered to help students understand issues of peer relationships, including sexuality, if older students are enrolled.

**Answer:**

Students who attend Peer Ears meetings learn how to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy relationships and about their options for increasing the health of a relationship.

The Residential Life curriculum offers discussions by specialists as well as Dorm Parents about healthy versus unhealthy relationships, roommate norms, communication skills, community responsibilities, cultural differences, and stress management. (See Residential Life Curriculum in the Dorm Parent Reference Guide.) The counselors also make small-group presentations about sexuality in the dorms, targeting specific genders and grade levels.

Kaiser Permanente's professional theatrical troupe visits campus to perform "What Goes Around," which teaches about STD prevention, testing, and different types of sexual relationships. A wide-open question-and-answer session follows the performance.

Our student-led, faculty-advised Gender Sexuality Alliance meets weekly to enable LGBT and allied students to share their concerns around adolescent relationships and sexuality.

5. What is the process for developing, updating, and communicating procedures, policies, and plans for routine safety issues at arrival and dismissal times, including carpool procedures?

**Answer:**

Student Services has implemented a new online attendance and tracking system called REACH, allowing students to check themselves into various locations on and off campus and enabling faculty to take attendance at events, do curfew checks, and record medical and behavioral incidents. REACH, which is also used to secure Away Permissions, is a multi-check system involving the Dean of Students, the Director of Student Services, and parents. It is used to request and track all absences from campus during holidays, breaks, and leaves of absence.

6. What are the school's supervision and safety policies and procedures concerning the transportation of students by the school or by contracted transportation providers?

**Answer:**

The Director of Transportation oversees student transportation in school vehicles. All school trips, including those involving transportation by outside providers, require chaperones, who receive first-aid kits, attendance lists, and emergency contact numbers for the Administrator on Call and Student Services.

Professional drivers receive online safety training via SafeSchools and a ride-along evaluation to ensure proficiency. Every applicant to become a professional driver has his or her driving record examined by the Director of Transportation and Human Resources. Any teacher who wishes to transport students in a school vehicle must have a valid California driver's license, a clean driving record, and driver training by the Director of Transportation. Faculty who transport students in their own vehicles assume liability for passenger safety. We also contract often with Cardiff Limousine & Transportation to charter buses for off-campus events such as field trips.

7. If the school has programs that take students away from campus for one or more nights, what risk management policies and procedures are in place for such trips? Evaluate their adequacy and effectiveness.

**Answer:**

As noted above, the chaperones who accompany all school trips receive first-aid kits, attendance lists, and emergency contact numbers for the Administrator on Call and Student Services.

Parents are notified about overnight trips, and every student must provide a cell phone number to the trip chaperone(s).

The Health Center is notified before trips to make sure that students with scheduled medications will not miss their doses.

8. Describe and assess the adequacy of the school's policies, procedures, and practices designed to prepare for and respond to major emergencies. Please consider natural disasters (e.g., fires, earthquakes, floods, etc.), as well as "man-made" emergencies (e.g., campus intruders, weapons on campus, neighborhood crises, etc.).

**Answer:**

The entire campus takes part in routine disaster drills during both the Academy year and the Summer Program. A new campus-wide intercom and alarm system, implemented in 2014-2015, can facilitate communication in case of a major emergency. Speakers placed in all classrooms and in other key campus locations, including a number of outdoor spaces, provide emergency communication across our sprawling campus. The system uses voice and alarm "tone" technology, with different tones signaling different situations, such as evacuation or lockdown.

The emergency preparedness book for which the Dean of Students is responsible details emergency policies and procedures. We have a contract with Hemet Unified School District to be provided with buses to transport children and adults to a designated shelter out of the mountains if we need to evacuate. During emergency drills we simulate boarding these buses. Maintenance and Housekeeping staff provide essential support during emergency drills, performing sweeps of all campus buildings until every student is safely accounted for.

9. As the school considers the health, safety, and well-being of the students and adults who constitute its community, what are the greatest challenges that it faces? What possible steps might be contemplated to address these challenges?

**Answer:**

Especially in the last two years, the school has made great progress in addressing health, safety, and wellness issues. The new REACH system, which permits more effective monitoring of students, is perhaps the most significant stride forward.

We are nevertheless aware that our facilities would benefit from improvement, especially in terms of security and dorm maintenance.

# V: Institutional Stewardship and Leadership

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## 14. Governance

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*The school has an active, engaged, and committed governing Board comprised of members whose collective and individual strengths support and advance the school. The Board of Trustees clearly understands and acts on its responsibilities, ensuring that its size, composition, and practices enable it to be effective. The Board of Trustees sets and safeguards the mission, and it hires, evaluates, and supports the Head of School. The Board also ensures that the school acquires the financial resources necessary for its success, and it strategically plans for the school's future.*

### Context Statement for Standard

Primary among the leadership responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are establishing the mission of the institution, hiring the Head of School, securing the resources necessary for the school's success, and planning strategically for the school's future. The Board works closely with and in support of the Head of School to make sure that it establishes appropriate policies which are upheld and adhered to. A successful Board regularly evaluates its own performance and systematically recruits individuals who possess the desired skills, resources, commitment, and dedication needed to constantly reinvigorate the Board's membership and heighten its effectiveness.

### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. The Board is aware of and acts on its responsibility to regularly review the mission and to update it as necessary.
2. The Board ensures that it operates in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, maintains appropriate and updated bylaws, and has its members abide by a conflict-of-interest policy.
3. The Board takes responsibility for systematic planning for the current and future financial health of the school, and it establishes and oversees the annual operating budget.
4. The Board plays a leadership role in ensuring the success of the school's fundraising programs through its individual and collective efforts to strategize, donate, and solicit.
5. The Board develops and implements a thoughtful and thorough process for the selection of the Head of School, using consulting resources as needed, while taking into account the school's mission, its challenges and opportunities and input from the school community about effective leadership for the future.
6. The Board and Board Chair make it a priority to develop and maintain a mutually supportive working relationship with the Head of School, mindful of the differences between the head's and the Board's responsibilities, while using a systematic process for head evaluation to assist with this work.
7. The Board undertakes systematic comprehensive planning on a periodic basis, establishes the major strategic priorities for the school, and takes the lead in implementing Board-level initiatives that follow from those priorities.
8. The Board operates as an independent entity—or with functional independence within a larger organization, it has a clearly defined process for its perpetuation, and it has established leadership succession procedures and practices.
9. The Board conducts a comprehensive program for new member orientation and ongoing Board education.
10. The Board is knowledgeable about the school and it systematically gathers, analyzes, and uses data to make important decisions.
11. The Board has a clearly understood and regularly used process for evaluating its own effectiveness, individually and collectively, as well as the value and effectiveness of its

- composition and committee or task force structure.
12. The Board has a clearly documented committee or task force structure with specified responsibilities and projects for each.
  13. The Board itself helps the school community to understand the scope of its responsibilities and the necessary differences between Board and administrative authority, responsibilities, and purview.
  14. There is a documented job description for individual trustees and for the Board as a whole, which includes standards and expectations for attendance, participation, financial support, and committee or task force involvement.

#### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. The Board operates in compliance with a set of written, formally adopted bylaws.

**Answer:** Yes

2. The Board reviews the completed IRS Form 990, and its actions are recorded in the minutes.

**Answer:** Yes

3. Board policies are documented and current.

**Answer:** Yes

4. Minutes of all Board meetings are kept on file at the school.

**Answer:** Yes

5. Board fiduciary responsibilities are clear and documented, and the Board formally adopts the school's annual operating budget.

**Answer:** Yes

6. The Board regularly conducts a performance evaluation of the Head of School.

**Answer:** Yes

7. The Board regularly conducts an evaluation of its own performance.

**Answer:** Yes

#### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. What kinds of data and information are provided to the Board of Trustees during a typical school year, and how are the data and information used both to address the school's progress in achieving its stated goals and mission and to inform Board decision-making?

**Answer:**

Overview for further understanding of subsequent questions:

The Board of Governors is the governing body of Idyllwild Arts Foundation (IAF), which runs two distinct programs: Idyllwild Arts Summer Program and Idyllwild Arts Academy. IAF's President is the sole employee of the Board, and the Head of School reports to the President. The Board of Governors has twenty-four members.



Seventy-two members make up the Board of Trustees, who annually nominate and approve the members of the Board of Governors.

(Note: Questions reference the Board of Trustees, but answers reference the Board of Governors, aka Board.)

The Board of Governors meets four times per year. All of the institution's major departments (Academy, Summer Program, Development, Marketing, Admissions, Business Operations) submit reports to the Board before each meeting. The President also submits a report to the Board before each meeting, in addition to periodic updates on school activities.

Every meeting includes careful discussion of Business Operations with the most recent financial statements on hand, plus a close look at performance measured against budget. For each meeting the Board also sees reports from each standing committee, including the Audit Committee, whose Form 990 and Audited Financial Statements are presented in detail for the Governors' approval.

Every Board of Governors meeting includes an Executive Session with the President, or, if appropriate, without the President to permit sharing of more confidential information.

Since 2008 the Board has focused on the school's fiscal health and the need to achieve full enrollment and meet fundraising goals. We have achieved full enrollment in each of the last two years, and in 2013 we ended a capital campaign that had met its goal of raising \$6.35 million to build a new concert hall.

The Board adopted a Short Term Operating Plan for FY 2010 to FY 2013. In FY 2014 the Board hired a President whose goals included leading the school through strategic planning. In 2014 an outside consultant was hired to conduct an internal and external audit to support development of the strategic plan. Meanwhile, the Board oversaw revision of IAF's mission statement and started developing a vision statement, which it expects to adopt in May 2016. In September 2015 the Board held a strategic planning retreat and identified the goal areas for FY 2016-2020.

2. Assess the effectiveness of the Board's composition, orientation for new members, organization, committee or task force structure, and use of meeting time.

**Answer:**

Please see Overview above.

The Board's five standing committees (Advancement, Audit, Building and Grounds, Finance, and Governance) meet regularly, and include members of the Board of Trustees as well as the Board of Governors.

In 2014 the Board appointed a special Task Force of the Governance Committee, charged with reviewing several areas, including size and composition, board structure, giving, and number of meetings. The Task Force spoke with leaders of other schools and reviewed best practices as identified by NAIS and BoardSource. The Task Force is presenting its findings to the Board throughout the current school year. Once the school has a strategic plan which includes a vision statement, the Board will determine whether its own size and defined functions can support implementation of the plan.

The Governance Committee's orientation of new members includes a half-day session with key Board leaders and senior staff, and new members receive all relevant documents in a binder. Because new members may be voted in throughout the year, orientation can take place any time.

The Board sends out a Call-to-Meeting thirty days before a full meeting, while agendas and supporting documents go out at least seven days in advance. Board meetings typically last a full day, but sometimes stretch out to a day and a half.

3. How do the Board and its members evaluate their own effectiveness—both individually and collectively? How productive is this process? What procedures are in place to address ineffective or problematic Board members?

**Answer:**

The Board is evaluated periodically, most recently in 2013 with the use of BoardSource's Board Self-Assessment Survey. In 2013 the Governance Committee oversaw the process and shared the survey results in a full meeting of the Board. The Governance Committee continues to use those results to improve orientation, committee structure, engagement of its members, etc.

The Board plans to use BoardSource's Peer-to-Peer Assessment at some point after completion of strategic planning.

In 2015 the Board put in place a Governance Task Force to review and perhaps revise the bylaws and to evaluate Board policies. The Task Force is examining, among other things, Board terms, releasing or removing Board members from their terms, Board size, and the role of committees. Current bylaws permit removal of a Governor before his or her term ends by majority vote of the Governors (Article IV #7), but this is now under review with respect to both Governors and Trustees.

The fact that some members of the Board of Governors have been associated with Idyllwild Arts for several decades suggests the Governors' generally strong commitment to their service.

Typically, the Board Chair confers with the occasional problematic or uncommitted Governor, and so far all such situations have been resolved amicably.

4. How are the work and role of the Board, including its work in setting strategic priorities, communicated to the constituents of the school?

**Answer:**

The Head of School and the President attend all general meetings of the Board, while the Head reports relevant information back to faculty and staff. The Head and the President work together to make sure that all constituencies understand the Board's direction and strategic goals.

The communication of the new mission statement which the Board approved in July 2015 ("Idyllwild Arts Foundation changes lives through the transformative power of art") is an excellent example of community-wide conveyance of strategic priorities. The significance the Board attaches to community-wide understanding of these is clear from their insistence that faculty and staff make up most of the Strategic Planning Task Force.

The Board sought input from the entire school community to develop the new mission statement, keeping faculty and staff informed throughout the process. After its approval, the new mission was presented and discussed at a faculty meeting. Both process and resulting statement were also shared with various constituencies, including parents and select donors.

Our new Art in Society program resulted directly from adoption of the new mission statement. The program's emphasis on helping students engage serious local and global issues through art models beautifully IAF's mission to change lives through the transformative power of art.

5. Using a recent significant Board-adopted school policy, explain its origin and the process by which it became a policy. How does it support and strengthen the school? How do its adoption and implementation demonstrate the separate roles of the Board and administration?

**Answer:**

In July 2014 the Governors approved a summary of Board Oversight Activities that included each standing committee's responsibilities. The purpose, in anticipation of the hiring of the new President, was to clarify for the Governors the nature of their oversight role.

The Chairs of the standing committees and the officers of the Board of Governors drafted and reviewed the policy document. The new President offered her input to make sure that a proper distinction between oversight and management was in place before presentation to the full Board of Governors for discussion.

The Governors' input led to revisions, and their July 2014 meeting saw approval of the policy document. Key committee responsibilities were developed out of previously unformalized processes, with the Board using BoardSource-developed materials to help with a first draft.

Clarifying the Board's role as providing oversight and not management was crucial because the Foundation was emerging from a period of interim leadership, during which two members of the Board of Governors worked with the Head of School and the Director of the Summer Program to manage the institution. It was also important to remind the Governors that the Board already had vital oversight processes in place, thus there was no need to develop additional policies to get ready for the new President.

The Governors did form a Key Employee/Personnel Committee in preparation for her arrival, giving her a resource on personnel-related matters, and they also formalized a process to carry out the key Board responsibility of evaluating the President.

While the following material, up to and including reproduction of the new mission statement, appears also in Section I: Mission, it is worth duplicating here:

In August 2014, Idyllwild Arts Foundation hired Connor & Associates to facilitate strategic planning. The eighteen-month process was to include review of the mission statement, an internal and external assessment, and the drafting of a vision statement and a three-to-five-year strategic plan.

Although Idyllwild Arts Foundation has always had a strong sense of purpose, when strategic planning began it had three distinct mission statements:

The Mission of the Idyllwild Arts Foundation is to promote and advance artistic and cultural development through education in a beautiful, natural environment conducive to positive personal growth.

The Idyllwild Arts Academy provides pre-professional training in the arts and a comprehensive college preparatory curriculum to a diverse student body of gifted young artists from all over the world.

The Idyllwild Arts Summer Program provides arts instruction and experiences of the highest caliber to a diverse student population of all ages and abilities.

The Board of Governors agreed that certain core values grounded all three statements and therefore decided to articulate a single mission statement for the entire Foundation. To guarantee inclusiveness the Board also decided to seek input from the following constituencies:

Board of Governors

Board of Trustees

Student Leaders

Faculty Leaders

Senior Administrative Leadership Team

Strategic Planning Steering Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee met regularly between September 2014 and the following June, often including student leaders and parents in consideration of a new mission statement.

In July 2015 the Board of Governors approved the following mission statement:

"Idyllwild Arts Foundation changes lives through the transformative power of art."

The new mission statement has bolstered the President's efforts to bring about greater congruence between the Academy and the Summer Program. Furthermore, lively discussion of the mission has led faculty to enhance existing programs such as the Arts Enterprise Laboratory and to create new programs such as Art in Society, with its associated Distinction in Global Arts, Action, and Social Entrepreneurship.

6. Briefly describe how the Board has undertaken strategic planning. Using a recent example, describe the Board's effectiveness with regard to identifying strategic issues, formulating strategic priorities, and implementing productive initiatives.

**Answer:**

In 2009 the Board developed a Short Term Operating Plan aimed at increasing faculty and staff salaries—which were below national averages and had not risen the previous year—and at improving faculty housing.

In FY 2009 the Board authorized a Compensation Committee of Board members, faculty, and staff to review employee compensation and benefits. A four-percent salary raise for faculty and staff followed in FY 2010. Modest cost-of-living increases approved by the Governors in subsequent years, while other schools failed to provide such increases, have since lifted us above the national median.

Additionally, the assessment of faculty housing needs led to appeals to supporters who funded construction of two new faculty houses on campus, as well as improvements to existing on-campus housing.

7. *For schools with a religious affiliation* What is the relationship of the Board of Trustees of the school to the governing Board of the religious institution or sponsoring organization, and how effective is this relationship in supporting the mission and the independence of school operations?

**Answer:**

N/A

8. Assess the clarity and effectiveness of the separation of the Board's role, purview, and scope of authority from those of the administration.

**Answer:**

Idyllwild Arts enjoyed excellent leadership during the twenty-five-year tenure of President and Head of School William M. Lowman. The succeeding President served a difficult one-year term that ended in July 2012.

The next two years, when the school was without a President, a four-person team supplied leadership. An internally appointed Interim Head of School, an internally appointed Interim Executive Director, the Chair of the Finance Committee, and the Chair of the Board of Governors made up the team.

The Board hired the current President in 2014, the Head of School has been permanently appointed, the school no longer has an Executive Director, and the Chairs of Finance and of the Board of Governors are no longer involved in day-to-day operations.

The Board and the President continue to clarify the lines between governance, oversight, and management as the Board sets annual goals for the President that align with its own overarching priorities. Finalization of the Board's strategic plan will further clarify roles and responsibilities.

9. Based on the responses to the questions above, what are the two or three most important areas that the Board of Trustees should address with respect to strengthening governance and meeting major needs of the school?

**Answer:**

As the Governance Committee Task Force reviews these areas, the Board Chair believes these areas include need of a more formal process for identifying Governors based on strategic competencies; need of clearer understanding by individual Governors of their responsibilities to help achieve institutional goals; and need to engage Governors and Trustees more actively in efforts to expand the institution's donor base and strengthen its planned giving programs.

## 15. Administration

**Assigned Collaborator(s):** none

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*The administration effectively leads the school in assessing, planning, and innovating, as well as in managing the educational program and the overall operations of the school. The administration takes responsibility for establishing and maintaining a healthy, collaborative, and supportive environment for teaching and learning, and it actively promotes ongoing school improvement.*

### Context Statement for Standard

The Head of School and administrative team have full responsibility for developing, leading, and supervising the operations of the school. The administration's responsibilities entail collaboration with the Board regarding strategic issues and also with the faculty and staff regarding the school's efforts to build and sustain a high quality program. It is the work of administration to build a professional culture where the faculty are committed to their own development as teachers and learners; where curriculum is regularly reviewed and renewed; where communication is open and frequent; where future directions arise from a clear educational vision and a spirit of collaboration; and where every adult is committed to the nurture and support of every student.

### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. The school's administrative leaders, working in collaboration with the Board, prepare for the next stage of growth, help to organize strategic planning processes, and plan for resources needed in the future.
2. The school's administrative leaders provide direction and deploy resources to sustain and improve curricular and co-curricular programs and to make the student learning experience as positive as possible.
3. The Head of School, who is qualified by education, experience and abilities, effectively articulates a shared educational vision and embodies the values of the school in his or her work.
4. The members of the school's administrative team are qualified by education, experience, and abilities to carry out the duties and responsibilities which are delegated to them and to support the school's efforts toward institutional improvement.
5. Opportunities are provided for administrators, faculty, and staff to be involved in the planning and decision-making processes concerning professional development activities.
6. The administration ensures that there are communication channels available to students, parents, faculty, and staff to offer suggestions and voice concerns.
7. The Head and administration work effectively together, both individually and as a team, modeling the kinds of collaborative professional relationships they seek in faculty.
8. The Head makes it a priority to develop and sustain a mutually supportive working relationship with the Board Chair and Board members.
9. The Head and administrative team members communicate effectively with one another and with the faculty and staff. The faculty and staff experience this communication as being regular, reliable, open, honest, and effective.

### Baseline Requirement Checklist

**There is no Baseline Requirements Checklist for this Standard.**

### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. What are the strengths of the administrative team, and how are they reflected in the environment that the school has created for teaching and learning?

#### **Answer:**

The Academy's administrative team at consists of the Head of School, Deans, and Department Chairs. Their responsibility for the Academy's operation requires them to be collaborative problem-solvers. Operating a residential arts school with a large international population can be complicated. Social issues among students, competing demands on the students' time, and competition for resources produce a constantly changing climate of opportunities and problems.

Our administrators know they must confront issues by transparent sharing of information among themselves and that they must work together. Sometimes the Foundation President becomes involved in decision-making, usually at the request of a parent or when an issue raises financial or legal considerations.

At the time of the last self-study the Academy was led by the Deans of Arts, Academics, and Students. In 2014-2015 the Head of School eliminated the Dean of Arts position and gave the arts Chairs more authority to make productive changes in their programs.

The administrative team staunchly supports professional development through an open application process for funding. Support is available for an enormous variety of activities that include outside learning and teaching opportunities and participation in professional arts projects and productions. Faculty report their experiences back to the community and sometimes involve our students in their outside activities.

The administration also encourages faculty to develop new programs while refining existing ones. Recent examples of the former include the Intermester program, Art in Society, the Creative Technology Program, the faculty-built observatory, and the children's dance program.

Administrators maintain an open-door policy and make a strong effort to spend time out of their offices to visit classes and talk with students and faculty.

2. What structures and practices are in place to ensure effective communication among administrators, individually and as a team, and between administration, faculty, and staff?

**Answer:**

Regular meetings of Deans, Deans and Chairs, faculty, and departments serve as information-gathering, decision-making, and communication vehicles. In the last three years we have taken care to ensure transparency and accountability with these meetings, making the minutes available for all to see. This has increased trust within the school community. The processes for meetings and communication are continually evolving as the administrative team strives to improve. Faculty see the results of their feedback in the administration's actions.

The Academy Administrative Assistant informs the school community of each week's activities and special events by email. The Student Services Administrative Assistant records student attendance and works with the Dean of Students to make any needed corrections.

We concede that there is room for improvement in communicating administrative decisions and their rationales. The fact that our campus features no central gathering point for faculty or staff poses a challenge. Educational and support departments sprawl across our two hundred and five acres in several different locations. Even our lunch period spreads out over two hours during which, due to spatial constraints, staff tend to eat before faculty and students do.

The administration has taken steps since our last accreditation to address faculty mentoring and how to improve communication with people new to the community. Faculty orientation now includes meetings specifically for new faculty, and new teachers are assigned veteran faculty mentors to help them transition into our community. Meetings specifically for new faculty continue throughout their first year.

The Foundation President meets biweekly with everyone responsible to report directly to her, and biweekly with the entire administrative team. The Head of School meets weekly with the Deans and a representative from the Arts Chairs, and the Head of School, Deans, and all Department Chairs also meet weekly. The faculty meets biweekly and sometimes on special occasions to discuss topics at greater length.

3. How have the professional growth and development goals for administrators been determined and pursued? Has this process been effective in developing needed strengths in administration?

**Answer:**

Administrators self-identify their goals, stating them as part of the standard annual evaluation. Each administrator discusses his or her goals with the appropriate supervisor (Foundation President for Head of School, Head for Deans, etc.) to reach joint decisions about support and direction. Self-identified goals foster ownership of and commitment to a vision for one's own career, while the supervisor's involvement guarantees alignment with the goals and vision of the institution as a whole.

Goals and evaluations for the direct reports of the President work in much the same way as for the Academy administration. The Head of School, Director of Enrollment Management, Director of Business Operations, Director of Marketing, Director of Program, and Chief Advancement Officer set goals in consultation with the President. They review their progress periodically in one-on-one meetings and their annual reviews occur in June. Once the school's vision and formal strategic plan are in place, administrators' goals will be aligned with them.

This process has promoted growth. For example, the Head of School identified a need for support of his desire to grow in the role. The President agreed and, subsequently, he has taken part in the NAIS Institute for New Heads and has also started to participate in the annual CAIS Summer Conference, as well as informal gatherings of the Pasadena Area School Heads. These efforts have helped him build a network of colleagues from outside the school and start to develop as a long-term strategic thinker and visionary.

Self-identified goals of Deans and Chairs are promulgated at the start of the school year, reflected upon at mid-year, and evaluated at the end of the school year.

4. What avenues and programs are in place that help to develop leadership capacities among current and potential administrators at the school?

**Answer:**

A residential arts school provides many opportunities to faculty and staff for leadership in arts, academics, and residential life. Leadership capacities of current administrators are identified in the evaluation process and developed as outlined in question 3. The administration nurtures the capacities of faculty and other potential administrators on a case-by-case basis. We encourage faculty to identify their own areas of interest for which they can develop support and thus provide grassroots leadership.

The administration offers teachers who display administrative potential leadership roles within our existing structures, including judicial and hiring committees and committees for curriculum development, scheduling, or strategic planning. We may also offer formal leadership roles in residential life or sponsorship of student clubs. We have identified faculty members as potential Department Chairs and some of them have attended the CAIS Leadership Conference.

5. What is the role of administrators in clarifying the school's professional expectations for faculty and in addressing deficiencies in the quality of any teacher's performance?

**Answer:**

The administrative team's annual evaluation process for faculty is continually evolving and improving with input from faculty and Department Chairs. We strive for an inclusive process that aims to develop a faculty member's abilities. The administration shares evaluation criteria with faculty at the beginning of the year so that they can anticipate the areas to be addressed in the mid-year evaluation. We have moved toward holistic evaluation of faculty, taking into account student advising as well as interaction with peers. Students respond anonymously twice a year to surveys of their opinions about teachers.



Administrators also clarify professional expectations in the aforementioned meetings by direct communication of requirements. The recent frequent changes in administration have naturally occasioned opportunities to revisit professional expectations and means of communicating them to faculty.

6. How do administrators, individually and as a team, gauge institutional and programmatic needs? Describe how they typically deploy resources to meet those needs. Are these processes effective?

**Answer:**

Historically, programmatic needs at Idyllwild Arts have grown from the student level upward. Faculty in direct contact with students assess their needs and interests and strengths and weaknesses, measuring these against our curriculum and teaching practices. Their proposals for programmatic changes move through the Chairs and the Deans groups, which examine and refine them and decide for or against deployment. A change in our requirements of students must wait to take effect the following year, accompanied by revision of the curriculum guide, and a new course would follow much the same route. A smaller change, on the other hand—perhaps an additional performance or study hall—could take effect right away.

Consider the following example. In 2014-2015 the Arts Chairs brought to the Deans a wish to enforce consistently high standards by refusing to invite a student to return for the succeeding year. Their discussions with the Deans and ultimately the Head of School confirmed the need to evaluate a student artist as unsuited to continue at the school by referring to measures other than poor grades. Terms such as commitment, dedication, and service were identified as descriptors not easy to fit into a grading rubric. Eventually, Arts Chairs were empowered to assess each student's overall commitment to his or her arts discipline and to assign Arts Probation when appropriate. This policy took effect for the 2015-2016 school year and now appears in the Student-Parent Handbook.

Our existing processes, though effective, could be improved. We have room for more direction from leadership regarding needed improvements to the school to strengthen our position in the marketplace, give better service to families, and increase retention and student and parent satisfaction. The recent internal and external audits included in the strategic planning process give administrators a chance to ask probing questions and make more objective assessments of program and facility needs.

We struggled to evaluate institutional needs during our period of interim leadership. Their movement through an affected department such as Marketing to the President paralleled the movement of programmatic needs through the Chairs to the Head of School. Since 2013 we have operated under a set of Strategic Planning Initiatives developed by a task force during our first year of interim leadership. Their service in setting priorities is coming to an end, however, as we move forward with the comprehensive strategic planning process that will determine institutional priorities in the future.

We are outgrowing our tendency to look at programmatic and institutional needs reactively, working only to serve the students we happen to have. Increasingly, we find ourselves in a position of strength, capable of implementing programs to attract and serve the students we want.

7. How do the Head and administration manage the aftermath and challenging outcomes from difficult decisions? Cite a recent example that illustrates key dynamics.

**Answer:**

The Head of School and both Deans maintain an open-door policy for teachers and students to express their opinions or concerns. School policy has always been to announce good news to large groups and bad news individually or to small groups. Hard decisions have traditionally passed through the Deans Council, now made up of the Dean of Academics, the Dean of Students, and Arts Department Chairs in rotation. With the Academy now securely under the umbrella of Idyllwild Arts Foundation, the Foundation President is strongly positioned for involvement in these decisions when appropriate.

A recent challenging decision was whether to seize the chance presented by an alum to take part in a YouTube documentary series that would explore our students' lives and aspirations. Upper administration and the Board looked at the idea carefully, decided in its favor, and informed faculty in a meeting and parents by email. Some students and parents expressed concern about the "reality" nature of the project, but the administration addressed concerns individually and gave firm assurances that participation would be voluntary. The Head of School stated pointedly during our weekly All-School meeting that we must all be mindful of the stories we tell about ourselves through social media or other online means.

The Foundation President's relevance to resolution of difficult issues was tested last spring by a small group of students who objected to our Marketing Department's representation of them to the outside world. Their delivery of a signed petition to the President and the Head of School prompted an appearance by the President at our All-School meeting, where she remarked that the students would have done better to approach her directly. In the students' defense, however, their more frequent interactions with the Head of School and the Deans had left them with no clear grasp of the President's role. In understanding of and sympathy with the students' confusion, the President invited them to a meeting in her office, so that, ultimately, they felt their concerns had been heard and that they had been respected.

8. What are the most significant dilemmas that the Head and administration face that do not have easily identifiable solutions? What headway, if any, has been made in these areas?

**Answer:**

Every adult in our school community wants to create the best possible experience for our students, but our abundance of student and faculty talent makes competition for time and resources inevitable.

Our students pursue challenging courses of study in both arts and academics, as well as a student life curriculum that fosters positive personal growth. Time is always at a premium and we must work constantly to recommend wise allocations of our students' time. We have therefore eliminated Saturday academic classes, introduced study hall for our younger students, and streamlined our block schedule for academic classes.

Our budgeting process has become more inclusive, with Department Chairs, Deans, and the Head of School setting priorities and working closely with Business Operations to optimize our use of resources.

We continue to move away from dependence on a handful of exceptionally generous donors to more broad-based fundraising. The Development Office is also determined to set and strive for realistic fundraising goals instead of aspirational ones. Having become expert in projecting revenue from tuition, we now seek to develop comparable expertise in our fundraising projections.

9. Based on the responses to the questions above, what are the two or three most important areas that the school should address with respect to the administration or the challenges that lie ahead for it?

**Answer:**

Our communication needs improvement. The geographic dispersal noted in the answer to question 2 means that people who do not work together every day have few chances for “water cooler” conversations, and our academic mornings and arts afternoons limit cross-disciplinary discussions to lunchtime. Faculty often feel uninformed, despite the administrative team’s best efforts with Google Calendar (easy to forget to check) and weekly emails to all faculty (which compound email inundation and cannot replace face-to-face meetings at the water cooler). For the current school year we have reverted to some older practices, including paper list-style calendars, a faculty packet of forms (also available electronically), paper versions of handbook highlights, etc.

During the two years of interim leadership, our Board examined closely the positions of Head of School and Foundation President, deciding that the Head of School should focus on the daily running of the Academy program, while the President would take responsibility for external relationships, fundraising, and Board development. The President reports to the Board of Governors and the Head of School reports to the President, but their distinct functions must be more clearly communicated to all constituents. Administration also faces the challenge of transitioning from a merely reactive school culture to one that is proactively committed to realizing a long-term vision and plan.

## VI: Institutional Improvement and Sustainability

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### 16. Self-Assessment, Decision-Making, and Change

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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*The school regularly engages in assessment practices that include the collection, analysis, and effective use of relevant data. This data is employed in evaluating the school's educational programs, as well as in informing decision-making in other areas of school operations. The school readily identifies and promotes changes needed for school improvement in a manner that marshals sufficient resources and garners the community support necessary for successful implementation.*

#### Context Statement for Standard

Taking stock of a school's institutional health on a regular and ongoing basis and analyzing the resulting information and data to guide change and improvement are key elements in developing long-term institutional vitality and sustainability. Substantive school improvement is built upon an examination of meaningful data that reveals trends, and change requires a candid assessment of strengths, needs, weaknesses, and opportunities. Schools that ignore data-gathering and analysis in major decision-making place themselves at risk, as it is challenging to make consistently wise institutional choices when important facts are unavailable. By contrast, sustainable schools analyze data, ascertain its meaning, and use it to inform and guide institutional change initiatives. The data gathered through this process can help not only to deepen the understanding of challenges facing a school, but also to promote collaborative reflection, planning, decision-making, and, ultimately, school improvement.

#### Indicators of Meeting Standard

*Schools that are meeting the standard at a high level will typically exhibit most or all of the following indicators.*

1. Student performance data and information gathered about student learning are used to inform ongoing instruction, program review, and revision.
2. The staff has a clear role in organizing and providing useful data indicators of school health and effectiveness.
3. Board members and staff are experienced and adept in the use of data in decision-making.
4. Avenues are created for students, parents, school personnel, and alumni/ae to provide feedback on the school's effectiveness and considerations for improvement and change.
5. Data and information gathered about student learning guide a systematic professional development program designed to achieve continuous improvement.
6. Major change initiatives are a) based upon the analysis of relevant data, b) carefully planned, c) guided by the school's mission, d) communicated to constituencies, and e) monitored through an accountability plan.
7. The school additionally uses data from external sources to understand social, demographic, economic, and other trends and to inform its decision-making.
8. There is broad appreciation within the school of the importance of a strong capacity for institutional self-awareness and of sustained engagement with the understandings that such awareness provides.

#### Baseline Requirement Checklist

*Schools are typically expected to fulfill all of the baseline requirements listed below, as they are essential to the operation of an effective school.*

1. The school fully completes the annual data entry in all sections of the Independent School Dashboard.

**Answer:** Yes

2. The school participates fully, accurately, and in a timely manner in the data collection undertaken annually by CAIS and NAIS.

**Answer:** Yes

### Questions

*Please respond to each of the following questions, keeping in mind that they are intended to promote institutional self-reflection and depth of thought. Responses that display insight and succinctness are preferred over those that rely heavily on sheer volume and length. If, in order to avoid potential redundancy, a school chooses to answer two or more questions simultaneously with one essay response, it should be clearly indicated.*

1. Using three major change initiatives in the past five years, demonstrate how data was used to identify a challenge and formulate a plan of action for needed change. How does the school assess the effectiveness of the new initiatives?

**Answer:**

Our response to this question references the previously submitted progress report from our mid-term review. Details of each strategic initiative can be seen in the appended document if further explanation is needed.

Strategic Initiative 5.1: Idyllwild Arts hired a new President in 2011, but he left in July 2012 and the Foundation entered a period of interim leadership under an internally appointed Executive Director, an internally appointed Head of School, the Chair of the Finance Committee, and the Chair of the Board of Governors. The interim leadership helped the community move ahead thoughtfully before beginning the search for a new President.

The entire school community, including the Board, faculty, staff, parents, and students took part in a self-study led by a task force and aimed at deciding the best administrative structure for the Foundation. The self-study drew upon a school-wide survey of opinions about the new leader's essential qualities. The success of the new President will be determined in the upcoming years.

Strategic Initiatives 3.2 and 1.1: The strategic planning process collected data through internal and external audits and the reports of subcommittees on a broad range of topics, including energy consumption and student performance. The task force that led the process put forward short-term initiatives to guide decision-making during the period of interim leadership.

Strategic Initiative 9.5: The Enrollment Committee met regularly during the spring of 2012 in an attempt to determine how best to make current enrollment (two hundred and ninety-five at that time) work. In particular, they looked at whether a large international enrollment could be consistent with our mission by studying admission records and data on the effects felt in ESL courses, arts programs, the Resource Center, Residential life, and the academic departments.

As a result of the Enrollment Committee's work, we no longer accept students needing more than four years of ESL instruction, and we assess the English skills of international applicants during the admission process so we can place them in the appropriate grade. The individual filling a new position, Manager of International Student Relations, has improved communication with international families, and we have made professional development opportunities available to all faculty to help them serve ESL students. Finally, we have revamped the Advisor program to assist more complete integration of international students into our community. But financial need has caused excessive dependence on the recruitment of Chinese students, and integration into American culture remains a challenge for many of our international students.

Strategic Initiative 5.2-4: The self-study discusses the faculty pay scale in Chapter 14, question 6, and consideration of this issue has depended heavily on internal and external data.

2. How does the school educate the faculty and administration in the appropriate use of data to inform instruction and improve teaching and learning? What, if anything, could be done to make these education efforts more successful?

**Answer:**

The school educates the community in the useful application of data by showing the success of data-based decisions. Our strategic planning process is using a comprehensive internal audit along with an external audit that draws on interviews of alumni, community influencers, college admission representatives, and students who either enrolled and then chose not to re-enroll, or chose not to enroll at all. This data was shared with faculty, who will ultimately see its impact on the strategic plan.

In addition, the Enrollment Committee's data-driven work was highly successful.

The school community looks forward to increased reliance on data-driven decision-making.

3. In its decision-making processes, how does the school simultaneously encourage innovation and manage risk as it plans for the future or contemplates change? Provide relevant examples.

**Answer:**

- An arts school must promote risk-taking. Arts Chairs have extensive autonomy in developing their programs. Because of our schedule, size, and heavy dependence on adjunct faculty, they need the flexibility to make rapid course adjustments. The Head of School oversees their decisions and monitors the financial and school-wide implications of program changes to make sure they align with community needs.
- One example of our process for dealing with risky undertakings is our involvement with AwesomenessTV (see Chapter 15, question 7). Our Board of Governors, which includes people with expertise in the entertainment industry and entertainment law, studied the opportunity carefully. Throughout the production process we checked with students to make sure they were enjoying experience. When things became obtrusive at one point, we quickly changed how the show's producers were allowed to work. They asked to accompany our Theatre students on their annual trip to Chicago for the Unified Auditions for college, but we refused permission because their presence could have been distracting, and we always insisted on prioritizing our students' educational needs.
- Our Board is also involved in other big decisions involving risk, especially around financial issues. These include Admission's new Hobsons system for data and communication management and the possibility of our participation in the new TABS North American Boarding Initiative program.
- Encouragement of forward thinking is clear in our strategic planning process. All school leaders (the Head of School and the Directors of Programs, Business Operations, Enrollment Management, Development, and Marketing) were required to write their own vision statements to share with the Board. These served as the starting point of goal-setting for strategic planning.

- Our participation in the Consortium of Independent Arts Schools implies close relationships with Interlochen Arts Academy and Walnut Hill School for the Arts. We often share experiences and confer about ways to confront new challenges.
4. What data that the school does not currently have would aid decision-makers in their work of leading the school? Is there potential data regarding factors that are hard to measure that the school would find useful in decision-making and planning?

**Answer:**

The Retention Committee suggested that more complete data collection could help us improve our retention rate. We have no formal process for interviewing graduating or departing students.

We also have no data to measure the effectiveness of our arts training other than the alumni survey (which produced positive results) and our own impressionistic observations.

Nor do we have a way to quantify the success of our teaching of critical thinking skills across the curriculum. Hard evidence of our success or lack thereof would help us design our curriculum more confidently.

5. Using concrete examples, describe how significant change has occurred in the past at the school. When it has been successfully proposed, implemented, and embraced, what factors have made this possible? When proposed change has not been implemented or when it has been implemented but has not been successful, what has impeded it?

**Answer:**

Ten years ago, out of concerns about overstressing students and depriving faculty of sufficient class time, a diverse committee of community members looked carefully at different options for our class schedule, examining schedules at comparable schools as well as research on the adolescent brain and creativity-based learning.

Their work led to a modified block schedule which was deemed a big success. Tuesday through Saturday consisted of three eighty-minute class periods, and Monday of six periods of forty-five minute each. Math and science courses that did not meet on Mondays held Saturday classes.

But then, two years ago, the faculty who taught on Saturdays gathered data to show that performances, standardized tests, and off-campus activities produced high absence rates on Saturdays, so we moved those classes to Monday. For the current school year, the Deans, Department Chairs, and faculty decided together to make Monday a day of three eighty-minute periods. Two months into the new schedule it seems successful, though we will review it at the end of the school year. All of these successes resulted from inclusive, substantive discussions.

The Enrollment Committee's work, described above, also exemplifies successful and well-communicated change, initiated by broad constituencies willing to undertake substantive data-based discussions.

Efforts to formalize collaboration have been less successful. Several years ago we tried to make time during our bi-weekly lunch meetings to require faculty members to work on collaborative projects. But it felt forced, and the case made for the worth of this initiative did not satisfy all teachers. More recently, collaboration driven by groups or individuals has been more successful. This kind of organic collaboration is reflected in our large amount of team teaching as well as in innovative programs such as the Center for Creative Technology, Art in Society, the Arts Enterprise Laboratory, and the Consortium of Independent Arts Schools.

A compensation committee of several faculty members and one Board member met throughout the fall semester of 2013. They finally proposed a compensation system similar to the previous one while also suggesting that compensation should be linked to performance, but financial constraints blocked the proposal's full acceptance. Miscommunication and

misunderstanding among committee members and between committee members and administration was largely behind weaknesses in their use of data, and they would also have benefited from clearer articulation of their purpose by the Head of School and the Board.

6. As the school looks ahead at the prospect of implementing the major changes identified as important in various chapters of the self-study, what are the two or three most important things it must do to set the stage for the successful implementation of these changes? Are there any considerations regarding the overall *process* of change at the school that need attention or resolution at this time?

**Answer:**

Learning from the past, we need to continue to encourage deep discussion by broad cross-sections of our community. Going forward, a number of key issues need consideration:

- Communication: We must work continually to improve communication at all stages of these processes.
- Vision: With permanent leadership now in place, we must turn to developing a long-term vision to guide our decisions.
- Focused investment: We need the will to invest both philosophically and financially in the changes we decide upon.

7. What are the two or three most important areas that the school should address with regard to its effective use of data for self-assessment, decision-making, strategic planning, and the implementation of change?

**Answer:**

7. What are the two or three most important areas that the school should address with regard to its effective use of data for self-assessment, decision-making, strategic planning, and the implementation of change?

- The school needs to allow time for the methodical gathering of necessary data.
- We need to encourage and support this kind of work.
- The whole community must patiently distinguish between perception and truth while sorting through the voluminous qualitative data (much of it anecdotal) generated by the strategic planning internal and external audit.



# Summary

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## Self-Study Findings And Conclusions

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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This summary section should be written after the rest of the self-study work has been completed through the broad involvement of members of the school community in examining and assessing all of the essential components of the school's educational program and operations. This is an opportunity for the school to synthesize the results of its deliberations and writing into an overview that captures the broadest and most significant information and understandings that emerged from the self-study process.

### Questions

Please respond to the following questions.

1. What emerged from and was substantiated by the self-study process as the school's areas of greatest strength?

#### **Answer:**

Emerging from this self-study process as possibly the area of greatest strength at Idyllwild Arts Academy is its human capital. From board member to faculty, staff to student we enjoy a wealth of people who want to be here; who invest in its present and future; and who are passionate about its existence. Our discussions were lively and throughout displayed an undisputed desire to improve things. The period of time since our last self study process has been marked by an enormous amount of change. There has been financial difficulty in the school as well as in other world economies. There have been challenges in the top leadership level of the school and the staff and faculty who were here during those difficult times continued to move the school forward. In fact, that grass roots effort had several years of great success. We are a resourceful community and have demonstrated great resilience. Now that we have established a new and stable leadership structure and enrollment goals are being met we are poised to do even more great things. Our belief in our mission is felt across the institution.

2. What new and useful information about the school was generated by research or discussions associated with the self-study process? What did the school discover about itself?

#### **Answer:**

The self-study encouraged and benefited from broad communication across our diverse community. Our expansive campus makes swift, efficient communication a challenge, and the self-study often mentioned the need to improve in this area. Recognition of the problem's pervasiveness owes its discovery to the self-study.

The self-study has also helped us discover that we need to communicate better not only among ourselves, but with the world beyond our campus. We need clearer articulation of our vision, our mission, whom we serve, and why the education we offer is valuable.

3. In drawing upon the analysis of issues and the identification of future work contained in the various self-study chapters, what would the school now designate as its most important five to eight institutional strategic priorities for the next several years?

#### **Answer:**

- Communication—We must elevate our communication both internally and externally so that our operation is efficient and our constituencies understand the work we do.. This is key to our future in terms of attracting mission appropriate students and donors, generating strategic partnerships and achieving our goal of financial sustainability.
- Facilities—Facilities must be improved with a priority to assess and address any safety concerns and to better reflect 21st century learning.
- Value proposition—We must work hard to understand our value proposition across the entire institution. Once that value has been clearly identified, we must work to find ways to demonstrate that value and sharpen our message about it.. The years of transition and change have muddied that understanding among ourselves and the redefined mission statement is our first step in that process.. We must crystalize that understanding if we are to make it clear to others. The strategic planning process has been a productive toward this goal.
- Prioritization—Using our strategic plan as a guide, we must thoughtfully identify, prioritize and communicate institutional needs at all levels of the organization.
- Sustainable Finances— Broadening the institution’s donor base, identifying major partners, and developing and restructuring the Board will be significant toward sustaining the finances of the school. Additionally, decisions must be made regarding the balance between domestic and international students and the allocation of financial aid must be better aligned with the needs of the school.

# Document Center

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## Reference Materials

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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### Attachments

*Please submit the following documents with the self-study or provide appropriate links to the school's website where the documents can be accessed by the Visiting Committee.*

1. Map or sketch of the campus for use by the Visiting Committee

**Answer:**

[Idyllwild Arts Foundation Map.pdf](#)

2. Admissions packet, including all forms required for application

**Answer:**

[Idyllwild Arts Academy Application.pdf](#)

3. Brochures, current viewbook, and admissions-related marketing materials

**Answer:**

[Creative Writing.pdf](#)

[Dance.pdf](#)

[Film.pdf](#)

[Fashion.pdf](#)

[InterArts.pdf](#)

[Music Classical.pdf](#)

[Music Jazz.pdf](#)

[Music Orchestral.pdf](#)

[Music Songwriting.pdf](#)

[Theatre Acting.pdf](#)

[Theatre Musical.pdf](#)

[Theatre Design.pdf](#)

[Visual Arts.pdf](#)

[Idyllwild Arts Viewbook \(1\) \(1\).pdf](#)

4. Financial aid/tuition assistance information and application forms

**Answer:**

[IAA Financial Supplement 2015\\_2.pdf](#)

[Idyllwild Arts Academy Financial Aid.pdf](#)

5. Student and parent handbooks

**Answer:**

[Handbook.CurriculumGuide15.16.pdf](#)

6. School calendar

**Answer:**

[Online school calendar](#)

[2015-2016ImportantDates.pdf](#)

7. Curriculum guide or overview

**Answer:**

See Reference Material #5. This is a combined document. It is also available on the Idyllwild Arts website.

[http://www.idyllwildarts.org/uploaded/01\\_Academy/Forms/Handbook.CurriculumGuide15.16.pdf](http://www.idyllwildarts.org/uploaded/01_Academy/Forms/Handbook.CurriculumGuide15.16.pdf)

8. Faculty/employee handbook

**Answer:**

[RM8\\_FacultyHandbook2015-2016.docx](#)

[IAF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK Nov 2015 Master Edition 11 12 15.pdf](#)

9. Faculty evaluation protocol

**Answer:**

[ChairEvaluation2015-2016.docx](#)

[Dean of Academics Evaluation Tool 2015-16.docx](#)

[Dean of Students Evaluation Tool 2015-16.docx](#)

[Mid-YearSelfEvaluation2015-16.docx](#)

[StudentFeedback2015-2016.docx](#)

10. Evaluation protocol for non-faculty employees

**Answer:**

[HR Perf Eval ProcessGuidelines final rev 02.06.13.pdf](#)

[HR Exempt Perf Evaluation Form final rev 02.5.13 \(1\).pdf](#)

[HR Non-Exempt Perf Evaluation Form finalrev 02.5.13.pdf](#)

11. List of all administrators, providing name, title, date of appointment, education and degrees earned, and prior professional experience

**Answer:**

[RM 11- Administrative Leadership.pdf](#)

12. Job descriptions for all administrators and support staff members

**Answer:**

[Academy Admin Asst Job Desc. 11.20.2015.doc](#)

[Accts Payable Clerk.docx](#)

[Archivist - Krone Museum job des 11.23.15.doc.docx](#)

[Art in Society job des 111715.docx](#)  
[Assistant Dean of Admission.docx](#)  
[Assistant Transportation Manager.docx](#)  
[Bookstore Clerk job des.docx](#)  
[Bookstore Manager job des.docx](#)  
[Chief Development Officer job des Final 2-1-15](#)  
[College Counselor Job Description 02.21.2014.docm](#)  
[Controller job des 6.1.2013.doc](#)  
[Dean of Academics\(2\).doc](#)  
[Dean of Students job des.docx](#)  
[Department Chair job des.pdf](#)  
[Dev Grants Manager job des 6-13.doc](#)  
[Dev Services Coord job des.docx](#)  
[Director of Business Operations job des.doc](#)  
[Director Of Dev-Capital Campaign.doc](#)  
[Director of Enrollment Management job des.doc.docx](#)  
[Director of IT job des.docx](#)  
[Director of Marketing job des.docx](#)  
[Director of Programs job des.docx](#)  
[Director of Special Events job des.docx](#)  
[Director of Summer Programs Job Des 12-03.doc](#)  
[Dorm Parent Job Description 2015.docx](#)  
[Exec Asst Bus Ops job des July 2013.docx](#)  
[HC Coord. Lead Nurse job des.docx](#)  
[HC Office Manager Job Description - 04.2014.docx](#)  
[HeadofSchool JobDescription 113015.docx](#)  
[Housekeeper-Custodian Job Des.docx](#)  
[IT Support Tech Job Des.docx](#)  
[Lead Creative job des.docx](#)  
[Lead RN Job Description 4.2014.docx](#)  
[Library Assistant job des.doc](#)  
[Library Coordinator.job des.doc](#)  
[Maint Tech Job Des 2015.docm](#)  
[Maintenance Lead job des.docx](#)  
[Manager Major Gifts job des 01.15.2013.docx](#)  
[Manager of Alumni \\_ Parent Relations job des 12.1.11.docx](#)  
[Manager of Alumni \\_ Parent Relations job des 12.1.11.docx](#)

[Manager of Communications \\_ International Student Relations.pdf](#)

[Network Administrator job des.doc](#)

[Orchestra Director job des 4.1.2014.docx](#)

[Plant Manager Job Description.docx](#)

[President IAF job des 11.30.15.docx](#)

[Registrar job des 113015.docx](#)

[Student Services Coordinator job des.doc](#)

[Student Services Director job des](#)

[Transportation Manager job description.doc](#)

[Webmaster job des 4.20.15.docx](#)

13. Audit from the fiscal year preceding the visit (Please submit three official hardcopies from the auditor—two should be mailed to the Visiting Committee Chair and one should be mailed to the CAIS office. *This is the only document that will need to be submitted in hardcopy*)

**Answer:**

[Idyllwild Arts Foundation FS Audit 6.30.15 \(1\).pdf](#)

14. Current-year budget

**Answer:**

[FY16 Budget Governors.pdf](#)

15. Most recent monthly operating statement (with comparisons between budgeted and actual amounts)

**Answer:**

[IAF Financials 9.30.15 Income Statement.pdf](#)

16. Most recent Annual Report (typically from the Development Office)

**Answer:**

[Annual Report 2014\\_FINAL.pdf](#)

17. Copy of the school's current bylaws (noting date of adoption)

**Answer:**

[Articles of Inc 1947 \\_ Bylaws 2013.pdf](#)

18. List of all members of the governing body, noting occupations (and current employers), years of service on the Board, and committee assignments

**Answer:**

[Board Member List - Affiliations - July 2015.doc](#)[Board Committees and Officers October 2015.docx](#)

19. Calendar of meetings for the governing body

**Answer:**

[IAF Board Meeting Profile FY2016 DATES ONLY.docx](#)

20. Description of the committee structure for the governing body

**Answer:**

This information is included in the bylaws.

[Articles of Inc 1947 \\_ Bylaws 2013.pdf](#)

21. Summary of the most recent self-evaluation of the governing body

**Answer:**

[BoardSource - Assessment 2013v2.pdf](#)

## Data Dashboard

Assigned Collaborator(s): *none*

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We have two Data Dashboards, one for day schools and one for boarding schools. Choose the correct dashboard, and then upload the completed file below.

[2015-16 Dashboard: Day Schools](#)

[2015-16 Dashboard: Boarding Schools](#)

[Attachments](#)

Upload your school's dashboard.

1. Please upload your school's completed data dashboard.

**Answer:**

[CAIS\\_Dashboard\\_-\\_COMPLETED!!!.xlsx](#)

