



YEARS OF WASC

HISTORY
of the
ACCREDITING COMMISSION
FOR SCHOOLS

1962–2012



ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

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FOREWARD

The *History of the Accrediting Commission for Schools, 1962–2012*, was created to provide a brief summary of what now represents our “first 50 years.” It is the result of expanding the work completed 25 years ago when the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC) was completing its first twenty-five years of operation. Documenting the last twenty-five years of our institutional past was accomplished in part through the efforts of several contributors, including Dr. Don Halverson, and Dr. Donald Haught, former ACS WASC Executive Directors, who have provided observations about their years of service.

Growing from a small number of schools in 1962 to what now exceeds 4,500 institutions for learning, ACS WASC is deeply grateful to all those who have served on the Commission, volunteers who have chaired and served on Visiting Committees, staff who work tirelessly in the Burlingame and Temecula offices, and the schools who have ultimately ensured through their dedicated efforts that individual school self-studies effectively provide guidance and direction for improving the quality of our service to the students of the ACS WASC region.

The book was skillfully compiled and edited by Cynthia Newton, who works in the Burlingame Office. We thank her and all those who have contributed to the success of our organization over the last half century.

Congratulations to all of you for the various roles you have played in truly making a difference. Here’s to another 50 years of continued growth and success.

David E. Brown

Executive Director

Accrediting Commission for Schools

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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THE FIRST 25 YEARS: 1962–1987

[The following pages are excerpts from the *History of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges 1962-1987*, Lyle E. Siverson, April 10, 1987, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Oakland, California.]

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS

Organization: 1961

The organizational meeting of the Accrediting Commission for Secondary Schools of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges was held on November 29, 1961, in Burlingame, California. The concept of a new, umbrella organization of schools and colleges had been approved and a Steering Committee of representatives from the various associations had developed a proposed constitution. Prior to this November date, all associations involved had given approval to this proposed document (See Appendix A), and each of the three commissions was in the process of being established within the framework agreed upon by the parties concerned.

Nine of the thirteen original members to be appointed to the Secondary Schools Commission were present (See Appendix D). Also present by special invitation was William N. McGowan, Executive Director of the California Association of Secondary School Administrators (CASSA), a man who was the central figure in the development of the evaluation program for the public high schools. The nine members present were appointees of the various secondary school groups which were coming together in the new Association. Though each association was made up of schools with differing goals, they had at least two things in common. First, they had some type of certification or accreditation requirement for membership in their respective associations. Second, their schools were “accredited” by the University of California. For varying reasons and in widely differing degrees, there was dissatisfaction with the mandated requirement that the University of California publish an “accredited list of high schools.” Indeed, the University itself was uncomfortable in the role of accrediting schools with neither adequate resources nor support to develop a comprehensive evaluation and visitation program. Being on the “accredited list” meant, in reality, that the high school was offering courses of study which would lead to admission to the University and that the first semester grades of graduates of that high school in attendance at the University had been generally acceptable.

Howard H. Pattee, Executive Secretary of the California Association of Independent Schools, had been extensively involved in the planning for the new association. It was appropriate that he be the first appointee of CAIS to the Secondary Schools Commission. His group was not particularly unhappy with “accreditation” by the University. It was, after all, an association of “college prep” schools organized in 1940 with standards formulated by a Board of Standards composed of representatives of leading colleges. When it became apparent that the University might take steps to discontinue its accreditation role, the independent schools were eager to become affiliated with a large, private association which would help to guard against what they perceived to be an ever-present threat of increased State control by the legislature or excessive interference by the Department of Education.

John T. Foudy, Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, and Joseph F. Sharpe, Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, were the first members of the Commission to represent the Western Catholic Education Association. They too had been actively involved in the planning from the outset and had made significant contributions in the evolving structure and policies of WASC. WCEA had come into being as a result of concern that the University of California would discontinue its accreditation. As far back as 1940-48, when Bishop James O’Dowd was serving as Superintendent of Schools for the San Francisco Archdiocese, he was predicting the withdrawal of UC from the business of accrediting and recommending the establishment of a regional accreditation association rather than the alternative — accreditation by the State. In 1957 Msgr. Francis Quinn was assigned the task of organizing an association for the accreditation of Catholic secondary schools, and the WCEA was formed by the California Bishops and the Diocesan School Superintendents. At the time of the organizational meeting of the Schools Commission under WASC, 104 Catholic high schools had been evaluated and visited by the WCEA.

WCEA members were motivated to become a part of WASC because it represented a non-governmental, private agency that would help to insulate them from State or Federal government controls. There was an additional concern, however. Just as they did not want to submit their schools to the control of the State, neither did they want to turn over that control to a private agency which might adopt procedures and standards heavily skewed toward the public schools. Early in the planning process Father Foudy expressed this concern. In a five-page position paper at the December 12, 1960, meeting of the Steering Committee, he cautioned that “any new accrediting association for high schools must somehow be disassociated from any particular school system or from a single philosophy of education.” He also expressed doubt “that an evaluative instrument standardized on public

schools could be applied without modification to private schools.” This concern found a receptive ear and was ultimately expressed in Article IV of the proposed Constitution: “The standards for accreditation shall clearly guarantee that each individual institution is to be evaluated on the basis of the degree to which it is accomplishing the purposes and functions outlined in its own statement of objectives, and on the appropriateness of those functions for an institution of its type.”

Representing the Seventh-day Adventist Schools as a member of the Commission at its organizational meeting was Lowell Rasmussen, Secretary of the Department of Education Pacific Coast Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Going back as far as 1901, the Pacific Conference high schools had gone through an evaluation/visitation and accreditation program at the national level sponsored by the General Conference. Those high schools were also on the University of California Accredited List. They were interested in maintaining an affiliation with a private accrediting body as well as their own church organization. Consequently, Dr. Rasmussen and other church officials had participated actively in promoting the formation of a regional accrediting agency.

The five additional members of the Commission present at the organizational meeting were representatives of the public high schools. All had been actively involved in developing the evaluation/accreditation program for public high schools and in creating the Accrediting Commission for CASSA. They were: J. Wesley Berry, Principal of Modesto High School; Donovan E. Cartwright, Superintendent, Tulare Union High School District; Irwin A. Dann, Assistant Superintendent, Fresno City Schools, Hal W. Hamm, Superintendent, Santa Ynez Valley Union High School District; and William Bruce Kirkpatrick, Principal, John Marshall High School, Los Angeles.

CASSA had been motivated to become involved with the evaluation/accreditation of high schools in the late forties and early fifties. This was the group with the greatest dissatisfaction regarding the University of California Accredited List. High school administrators found it inconsistent, even repugnant, that the same State laws which required them to enroll and meet the needs of all students as a comprehensive high school would mandate that those schools be “accredited” solely on the basis of meeting the needs of an extremely small sample of “college prep” students who represented only one segment of the public high school to the exclusion of its responsibilities to other students.

Committees were established to examine the various evaluation instruments which were in use at the time. The Evaluative Criteria were tested in several high schools in the early fifties but they were regarded as too quantitative in

their approach. In the late fifties a format was developed based on qualitatively oriented procedures that were originally formulated by William McGowan as a part of his doctoral studies at Stanford University. After being tested in several schools and after several revisions, "Procedures for Appraising the Modern High School" became the basic instrument used by CASSA in its evaluation program.

In 1957 legislation was approved making it possible for school districts to pay for the costs of accreditation. CASSA formed an Accreditation Committee in 1958. By 1962 when it became a part of WASC, 482 public high schools had entered the program.

The nine men, representing four separately identified constituencies, assembled at 9:30 a.m. on November 29, 1961, to organize the WASC Accrediting Commission for Secondary Schools. After agreeing that Donovan Cartwright serve as Acting Chairman, the group invited William McGowan to join them. There was consensus that they should remove the word "proposed" from their copies of the WASC Constitution since it was reported that each organization had officially approved it. J. Wesley Berry was elected to serve as the first Chairman of the Accrediting Commission for Secondary Schools. Appointed to represent the Commission on the Board of Directors were J. Wesley Berry, Father John T. Foudy and Erwin Dann. Howard H. Pattee was designated as the Commission representative on the Junior College Commission. Hal W. Hamm was appointed as the Commission representative to the Senior College Commission.

L. W. Hedge, Principal of Bakersfield High School was designated as the Executive Director. Mr. Hedge was admirably qualified for the position since he had been Chairman of the initial CASSA Accrediting Committee formed in 1957 to offer accreditation to public high schools. Furthermore, he had been one of the key persons in negotiating with representatives of other groups to form a new Regional Accrediting Association.

The minutes of the meeting indicate that four members of the original thirteen-member Commission were absent from the organizational meeting. They were: Everett O'Rourke, the first representative of the California State Superintendent of Schools; F. Melvyn Lawson, Superintendent, Santa Monica City Schools; Gilbert Collyer, President of Shasta Junior College, representing the Junior College Commission; and Charles S. Casassa, SJ., President of Loyola University, representing the College Commission.

WASC: 1962

On January 24, 1962, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges was officially incorporated in a meeting attended by the three representatives designated by the Commission. The Board decided to give tentative approval to the criteria and procedures for accreditation by the three Commissions subject to final approval at a subsequent meeting at which complete documents would be submitted. On behalf of the Secondary Commission, Mr. Berry reported that it would be employing the several sets of criteria then being used by CASSA, WCEA, CAIS, and the Seventh-day Adventists with the intention that some common set of criteria, with sub-divisions for the different categories of schools, would be developed later.

A second item of business at the WASC Board meeting was the discussion of the question of the future status of the University of California Accredited List of High Schools. Dean Rolfe pointed out that it was published on the authorization of the Academic Senate and that it would require a rescinding action by that body to enable the University to discontinue the practice. The discussion culminated with unanimous support for a motion that the WASC Board request the University of California to discontinue publishing its Accredited List of High Schools. This action took place on May 24, 1965. Though the University ceased its accrediting function, it still continues to participate on joint WASC/University visits to new high schools seeking preliminary accreditation.

Leslie W. Hedge: 1962–1968

The spring of 1962 was a busy time for Mr. Hedge and the newly appointed Commissioners. Invitations for charter membership were extended to all high schools on the University of California List and to all those accredited by any of the four merging associations. The annual fee was set at \$50, but, to encourage a prompt response, schools applying for charter membership prior to July 1 were offered an annual fee of \$25 until the completion of their terms. By the July deadline 490 high schools had applied for membership.

During this transition period office space and clerical assistance were being provided by CASSA. The membership response created pressing demands to organize and to manage systematically the evaluation and accreditation of these schools. Additional space and help was needed. At the same time the newly organized Commission recognized that it would face a temporary financial squeeze until a larger membership base could support the program. With Commission approval, Mr. Hedge accepted a teaching position with San Francisco State College and temporarily removed himself from the WASC payroll. Adequate office space was located at 1499 Bayshore in

Burlingame and Mrs. Barbara Hedge was hired to establish and manage the office under the direction of Mr. Hedge who continued to schedule as much time as possible for Commission business.

During the first year of operation, 115 schools were scheduled for evaluation. Self-study materials were mailed, chairs and committee members were invited, training workshops were scheduled, bulletins were distributed to member schools, and a system of records was established. The system and procedures established enabled the office to accommodate 172 evaluations and visits in 63-64, and approximately 200 each year thereafter. Barbara Hedge continued to serve as the Office Manager/Administrative Assistant for the next twenty years. Her skill, efficiency, and dedication in supervising the affairs of the office were instrumental in its success.

Expansion of the territory to be served by the region was to the west. Two church-related schools in Hawaii applied for membership in June 1962. The colleges and universities in Hawaii were seeking membership in WASC but a few of the high schools were already members of the Northwest Association. Negotiations with Northwest were successful; the Association offered to discontinue services in Hawaii and encourage their member schools to seek membership in WASC. By June of 1963 twelve of the 41 high schools in Hawaii affiliated with WASC. In 1964 the State Superintendent in Hawaii, responding to the Commission's invitation, nominated a member of his staff, Richard Mizuta, as the first Hawaii representative to serve on the Commission. In 1966 the first schools from Guam came into the program. In 1967 the Middle States Association, which was accrediting four American/International schools in Asia, agreed that the territory in East Asia be designated for WASC.

Additional types of schools came into the program with the decision at the first meeting in June 1962 to include junior high schools. Adult Evening Schools expressed their interest through the Department of Education and the California Association of Adult Educators. On December 3, 1962, the first two adult evening schools to go through the self-study/visitation process were accredited. Continuation High Schools came next. In cooperation with the California Association for Continuation Education, an evaluation instrument was developed. In 1967 the process was successfully tested with two continuation high schools, and accreditation formally commenced.

The CASSA Evaluation Committee under the leadership of Ray Andreen, Assistant Superintendent, Contra Costa County, continued with the development of new and the revising of existing evaluation instruments. Committees in the WCEA, CAIS, and the Pacific Conference adapted the instruments to use by their schools. Form A was used for the first self-study,

followed by Form B with an emphasis on curriculum for the second round, five years later. The plan called for a cycle of five-year visits, followed by the use of a Form C with a focus on future planning. Self-study was to be conducted with total involvement of the staff and participation by students and community representatives.

From the beginning a system of evaluating the performance of chairpersons and visiting committees was instituted. Each committee was to include someone from a school district office, a school level administrator, a high school teacher, a representative of a college or university, and the State Department of Education. Nominations were invited, and a personnel file of potential chairs and committee members was built up. From the initial year of operation, evaluations of committee members and chairpersons were requested, reviewed, and recorded. The accumulated data was used in the selection process and contributed to an increasingly high quality of service on the committees.

Unfortunately, Mr. Hedge became terminally ill with cancer during the 1967–68 school year. Since he was unable to conduct the Fall Workshops, Mr. Berry, the Commission Chair, and other Commission members assisted in this important task. Management of the office and details of schedule implementation continued smoothly because Mr. Hedge was able to be in the office or in contact with Mrs. Barbara Hedge, who maintained those responsibilities. In June of 1968 the Commission employed J. Wesley Berry to be its Executive Director and Erwin A. Dann, Superintendent, Fresno Unified School District, was elected to be the Commission Chair.

Mr. Hedge was a dynamic leader and was instrumental in establishing a solid foundation on which future expansion of programs and services could be built. During the six years of his tenure as Executive Director, the total membership increased from 490 to 1,080. The annual budget increased from approximately forty thousand to eighty thousand dollars. The financial picture improved from a 50% deficit to a \$12,000 reserve. The area of service increased from California to Hawaii and East Asia. Types of schools served expanded from high schools only to include junior high schools, adult evening schools, and continuation high schools.

It was fortunate for the Commission that Mr. Berry made himself available for the Executive Director position by taking early retirement from his position as Principal of Modesto High School. There was no one who was more familiar with the background and development of the accreditation program. He had been extensively involved with CASSA's program and had served as its Accreditation Commission Chairman. He had been a member of the Steering Committee which had major responsibility in the formation of

WASC. He had played a major role in the negotiations with the Northwest and Middle States Associations in obtaining their agreement to yield territory in the Pacific to WASC. His background and ability enabled him to provide continuing leadership and to maintain the momentum established by Leslie W. Hedge.

J. Wesley Berry: 1968–1975

The budget during the 1967–68 year was the first year in which the Commission was able to operate with a surplus. With fees generating approximately \$90,000 there was a surplus of about \$12,000. The early years had been a financial struggle while the membership was growing to a sufficient number to enable the program to become self-supporting. The Commission had wisely chosen to keep fees low to attract membership even to the extent of offering charter memberships at reduced fees to eligible schools which came into the program prior to July 1, 1962. Those reduced annual fees for charter members continued until the particular school's next accreditation visit was scheduled. Grants from foundations and participating organizations were not sufficient, and Mr. Hedge had frequently postponed payment of his own salary in order to keep the Commission in the black. One of the first actions of the Commission when Mr. Berry assumed office was to use some of those reserves to pay the accumulated wages due Mr. Hedge to his widow, Mrs. Barbara Hedge.

The first budget submitted by Mr. Berry in 1968–69 was a modest increase reflecting increased membership and inflation. The budget during the second year, 1969–70, reflected about \$175,000 in income with expenditures of \$157,000 and a surplus of \$18,000. This appeared to be almost a doubling of the budget in two years. It was, however, primarily a change in the accounting practice. Prior to that time the income and expenditures for visiting committees were handled as a revolving fund. Since 1969–70 all income and expenditures have been included in the budget, and there has been an effort to establish visiting committee fees that will cover the expenses of the visiting committees with sufficient margin to provide for the cost of self-study materials and workshops.

Erwin Dann, a member of the original Commission and one who had signed the WASC Charter of Incorporation, retired in 1970. He was succeeded as Chair of the Commission by Robert D. Morgans, Associate Superintendent, Visalia Unified School District, who had been appointed to the Commission by CASSA in 1965. It was during this period of time that the thirteen-member Commission began to expand its membership. The addition of a teacher to the Commission came in June of 1969 with the California

Teachers Association responding to an invitation to submit a nomination. Stewart Herriott from Zane Junior High School in Eureka and a former president of CTA was the first CTA representative. He continued to serve until 1978. Representation from the California School Boards Association was approved, and in 1969 Mrs. Portia Goode began her service, which continued until 1977. She was a member of the Grossmont Community College Board in San Diego and was active in the Instruction Committee of the State Association.

In January of 1971 the Commission authorized the addition of a representative of the California Adult School Administrators Association. By this time 49 adult high schools were accredited, a self-study instrument patterned after Form A had been developed, and The Adult Education Association was working with the staff in developing a Form B for the second round of visits. Dr. Thomas Damon was the first representative of this group to be appointed. He had an eleven-year tenure with the Commission, serving from 1971 to 1982.

Territorial expansion continued. International School Manila was the first overseas school to go through the WASC accreditation process. From 1968 to 1975 there were a total of 27 overseas schools in East Asia which came into the program. Activity in American Samoa commenced in 1971–72 with four public high schools and two church-related high schools conducting self-studies and scheduling visits by teams from Hawaii and California. Membership in Hawaii expanded to 60 schools, and in 1974 the Commission scheduled its January meeting in Honolulu for the first time.

Closely related to the matter of expansion was the possibility of a merger with the Northwest Association proposed in June of 1969. This movement is discussed in the history of WASC included in this publication. Though the Secondary Commission saw advantages in the merger and supported it from the beginning, serious and specific concerns were noted.

The concerns all related to the vast differences in both basic philosophy and procedures which existed between the Secondary Commissions of the two Associations which did not appear to exist between the College Commissions. Northwest used a nationally based and controlled instrument, the Evaluative Criteria, for self-studies, while WASC used its own instruments reflecting its own criteria. Northwest based the accreditation of a school almost entirely on quantitative data provided by the principal in an annual report, but WASC based the accreditation on the self-study and the visiting committee report. Northwest used a ten-year cycle of self-study while WASC used a five-year cycle. Northwest used State Committees in the evaluation/accreditation process while WASC did not. Northwest appeared to

be essentially a public school program with little or no private school participation or representation, while WASC had extensive participation of both public and private schools. Though a proposed constitution provided sufficient autonomy for each commission to continue responsibility for its own program, the merger was defeated in the Northwest Delegate Assembly.

During Mr. Berry's tenure in office the membership grew by approximately 25% from a total of 1,080 to 1,345 schools. This increase resulted in a greater load on the office in the number of visits, from 180 to 1968-69 to 260 in 1974-75. There was a corresponding increase in the number of revisitations to schools receiving limited terms, preliminary visits to newly constructed public schools, and candidate visits to private schools applying to come into the program for the first time. The file of personnel cards with cumulative data on performance grew and was extremely helpful in structuring committees which consistently received ratings of 96 to 98% (good to excellent) on a four-point scale. Fall workshops, though held on a voluntary basis, were well attended by committee chairpersons and members with approximately 800 to 1,000 in attendance each year.

In cooperation with the School Boards Association, a process of nominating members for participation on visiting committees was commenced. A pilot project to use high school students commenced in 1972-73. Participation by members of the California State Department of Education staff was unpredictable with the number varying from a low of none to a high of 110. The plan from the outset had been to include an SDE representative on each public high school visit. Expenses of this person were to be assumed by the State Superintendent as part of the mandated responsibility of that office to monitor and visit the schools of the state. The erratic representation from the State clearly reflected the budget situation of the SDE for the particular year which, in turn, affected the WASC budget when expenses had to be picked up by WASC for the person invited in place of the SDE representative. On several occasions the Commission addressed the question of reimbursing the SDE representatives for their participation. The decision has consistently been negative with the feeling that this is a State responsibility; WASC provides the access for the State Department to participate in the program if it desires. The Commission has not felt that it should require the school district to pay for the visit of an SDE representative to one of its schools through a resulting higher fee schedule.

With the growth in the number of schools and the types of schools being served, the process of developing and revising evaluation instruments became an increasingly heavy responsibility. The original instruments were developed by CASSA, and copyrights were held by that Association. This included Forms A, B, and C which were to be used in sequence each five

years with Form C regarded as the continuing instrument. These forms all reflected the criteria adopted by the Commission. The various types of schools in both the public and private sector adopted these instruments with the approval of the Commission for use in their schools. Starting in 1969 CASSA and CASA sponsored a summer workshop with invitations extended to both public and private school persons experienced in the WASC process for the purpose of reviewing the instruments and suggesting improvements in procedures. When the Association of California School Administrators was formed in 1971, it inherited the membership and functions of both CASSA and CAS A. An Evaluation and Accreditation Committee was formed with Dr. Robert Reeves, a member of the Commission, as the ACSA Chairman. Though ACSA assigned the copyrights to WASC, it continued to be extensively involved in instrument development by co-sponsoring summer workshops and by processing nominations to the Commission which had previously been made by CASSA, CASA and CASAA.

The task of instrument development and revision had increased to the point where additional staff members were employed in July of 1973 to supervise this responsibility. Dr. Rudy Sando was employed on a half-time basis as Director of Research and Evaluation. Dr. Sando had recently retired as the Dean of the School of Education at Los Angeles State University and had been extensively involved with the WASC program since its development with CASSA. A four-year sequence of evaluation and revision of all self-study instruments was scheduled with an Advisory Committee for each type of school. A Commission member with personal experience and interest in the particular type of school was included on each Advisory Committee. This method greatly facilitated the instrument development and revision procedures and resulted in continuing improvement.

Another result of the growth in membership and activity was the increased load in the office. Mrs. Barbara Hedge efficiently organized and managed the affairs in the office and in 1971 was appointed Administrative Assistant. She was joined by a staff marked by stability and loyalty to the WASC program, which contributed to a well-earned reputation of efficiency and dispatch throughout the region. Four persons who served on the staff for fifteen years or more deserve particular mention. John Mallozzi was hired in 1965 as an offset printer and served until he retired in 1981. Irene Young was employed in the clerical division in 1968 and continues to the present date. Jane Johnson worked efficiently in the clerical division from 1969 to 1986 when she retired. Lillian Mineke worked as a bookkeeper-accountant from 1968 to 1983 when she retired.

In August of 1972 the Commission authorized the Executive Director to investigate the approval process by the U.S. Office of Education.

Subsequently, in June of 1974, the Commission approved an application document prepared by Mr. Berry and Dr. Sando. The application for recognition was essentially a self-study of accreditation procedures in accordance with criteria established by the U.S. Office. The value of this self-examination process was one of the determining factors in the decision of the Commission to seek recognition. Furthermore, the Commission was now accrediting adult evening high schools which were offering programs that frequently entitled the students to veteran's or other benefits so long as they were in attendance at a school "recognized" by the U.S. Office. Recognition was achieved and has been continuously renewed after subsequent reports at four-year intervals.

It was at this time that interest in elementary school accreditation began to develop. The first pressure came from the overseas schools which usually included both elementary and secondary grades. The Commission's first action in this direction was a carefully worded provision to grant accreditation to elementary schools but limiting it strictly to EARCOS (East Asia) schools. There was experimentation with elementary school self-study and evaluation, but up to this time the interest was strictly in evaluation and not in accreditation.

In June 1974 Mr. Berry announced that he would retire on July 1, 1975. The position announcement and screening procedures were adopted by the Commission, and a Screening Committee was appointed. During the summer and fall applications were reviewed and candidates were interviewed. At the January 1975 meeting Dr. Lyle E. Siverson, District Superintendent of the Morgan Hills Unified School District, was selected to succeed Mr. Berry. Dr. Siverson had been a member of the Commission since 1970 as a nominee of CAS A. In that capacity he had represented the Commission as a member of the Community College Commission and on the WASC Board of Directors. He had also been designated to introduce the WASC accreditation program to the schools of American Samoa and had oriented both the public and private schools there to the self-study process.

Dr. Siverson's background in accreditation both during and prior to his service on the Commission greatly facilitated the transition to his duties as the Executive Director. During the spring, Mr. Berry, Mrs. Barbara Hedge Klingborg, and he spent several days together in the office reviewing office procedures and details. Mr. Berry and Dr. Siverson were mutually agreed that this orientation was completed and both were proceeding as usual with their respective duties when a massive heart attack tragically ended the life of Mr. Berry on April 11. Dr. Siverson was not scheduled to assume office until July 1, but under the circumstances he was able to arrange to divide his time between the School District and the Commission office. Once again in a

transition situation, Barbara Hedge Klingborg was left with major responsibility for keeping the operation in order and on track.

At the June 1975 meeting Robert Morgans retired after serving on the Commission for ten years. During that period of time he was the Chair of the Commission for eight years and President of the Association from 1971–73. Eugene B. Even, Superintendent, Paradise Unified School District, who had served on the Commission since 1968, was elected to chair the Commission.

Lyle E. Siverson: 1975–1984

The increasing membership and activity of the office mandated additional space. This was not available at the 1499 Bayshore location, which had been the Commission headquarters for more than ten years. The office remained in the same general area but was relocated at 1614 Rollins Road in Burlingame.

Dr. Sando had done a splendid job of organizing, scheduling, and implementing a systematic program of instrument development and revision as a half-time Director. It was his desire, however, to move to his retirement home in Sacramento but he was willing to continue this type of activity on a reduced scale. A plan to use several part-time consultants was adopted. The equivalent of the half-time position was assigned to consultants as independent contractors who performed specific tasks in instrument development or revision. All eighteen evaluation instruments were scheduled for review and revision on a four-year cycle. A consultant was assigned to work with an Advisory Committee, which included a member of the Commission as well as several educators who were working in the type of school to which the instrument applied.

One of the first projects was to develop a new evaluation instrument to be called the New Approach. Dr. Sando and Mr. Berry had developed the basic idea of an instrument based directly on the Criteria for Accreditation. Robert Morgans, recently retired as the Chair of the Commission, served as the Consultant with an Advisory Committee to develop a pilot edition. This edition was tested successfully in four high schools in 1975–76; based on that experience a first edition was published. Schools were given the option of using the New Approach form in lieu of Form C which was regarded as the “continuing” form for use after the Forms A and B had been used successively for the first two self-studies. From the outset the New Approach was well received, and more and more schools chose to use it in the self-study process. Each four years, when the New Approach was revised, there was an in-depth review of the criteria for accreditation since the format was based directly on the criteria. In rapid succession the New Approach Form was adapted for other types of schools, and the name was changed to the

Criteria Approach Form. It became, and continues to be, one of the most popular forms available.

During this time an evaluation instrument specifically for the overseas schools was developed. With the help of an Advisory Committee of EARCOS educators, a form was devised which could accommodate any combination of grades K-12 with its focus on the private, overseas American/International school.

In 1976 the name of the Commission was officially changed by dropping the word "Secondary." This was to reflect the decision of the Commission to accept applications for accreditation from elementary schools throughout the region. It was already working with elementary schools in East Asia. The public schools were continuing to experiment with the evaluation process, and independent and church-related associations were operating their own programs of evaluation which were similar to accreditation.

In a related move the Commission adopted a District Plan of Accreditation which was designed to attract more junior high schools and elementary schools into the program. The basic idea was that a District would bring all of its schools into the program and develop a comprehensive district schedule of self-study and visitation for each school with some WASC visits to be scheduled each year. All other evaluation efforts, such as State Department Reviews, were to be incorporated into the plan. Terms of accreditation could be extended up to ten years with the proviso that there be a mid-term report and visit at the fifth year. In addition, annual reports were required. These were to be monitored by the District and the WASC team that visited the District that year. Eighteen districts opted to participate in the plan. It met with varying degrees of success, and it did attract many junior high schools and elementary schools. It was, however, different enough from the regular program that difficulties in understanding arose at the district, school, and visiting team levels. A further difficulty was the problem of coordinating the SDE and the WASC visits which had different cycles of reviews.

The response to elementary school accreditation from the private sector was infinitely greater than from the public schools. WCEA, which had developed a systematic program of school evaluation patterned after the WASC self-study and visitation process, determined that the option of accreditation should be made available to its schools. A joint WASC/WCEA visitation procedure was approved, and in 1978-79 thirty-six schools in the Los Angeles Archdiocese were the first to go through the process. Participation expanded at such a rapid rate that in 1982 Sister Ann Patricia O'Conner was employed as a part-time consultant by WASC to coordinate this program. A similar joint procedure was developed with CAIS, which had long been

working with its member schools in an evaluation program as a part of eligibility for membership.

Another new instrument grew out of activity in the area of career and vocational education. A grant was received for the purpose of appraising the WASC high school evaluation instruments to see how adequately the matter of career education was covered. Dr. Ragene Farris was employed as the part-time Consultant to implement this study. Working with an Advisory Committee several recommendations were made, and a Career Education Supplement was developed which could be made available to any high school going through a self-study. At the same time there was an interest on the part of the California Association of Regional Occupation Centers/Programs in the evaluation and accreditation of their institutions. Dr. Farris worked with that group in developing an instrument specifically tailored to the needs of that particular type of school. It was ready for use in 1982–83 and has attracted many ROP/Cs to enter the accreditation program.

The number of visiting committees scheduled each year was steadily increasing in proportion to the growth in membership. It reached a peak of 287 full visits in 1976–77 and would have reached approximately 325 in 1978–79 had it not been for the passage of Proposition 13. For some time the Commission had been considering some changes in visitation schedules and this appeared to be an appropriate time to do it. A six-year cycle of self-study and visits was adopted with an automatic written progress report required on the major recommendations at the end of three years. It was felt that the one year extension of time would be compensated by the motivation to follow-up on recommendations via the written progress report. This change would also reduce the work load and provide an opportunity to re-schedule the schools so that an approximately equal number would be scheduled each year. Consequently, during the first year after Proposition 13, schools were given the option of proceeding on schedule or postponing a year. Fortunately, the majority desired to proceed on schedule and the rescheduling of schools went forward in subsequent years to both reduce and balance the work load.

Another change affected the period of the visit. The most common suggestion on evaluation forms received from visiting committees was that the length of the visit be extended for more than three days. The Commission was hesitant to extend the time for several reasons, the most persuasive being the fear that many of the strongest committee members and chairpersons would not be able to serve. The compromise was to extend the time to 3-1/2 days so that the committee would arrive at the school on the afternoon preceding the visit, do their planning, become oriented to the school, and be ready to start early the next morning. This change was adopted and met with very favorable response.

Based on the successful experiment, the Commission adopted the practice of using students on visiting committees as a regular part of the program in 1975–76. At the option of the school being visited, a student could be placed on the committee as a fully participating member. If the size of the school warranted a seven-member committee, there was no additional cost for the student. However, if the committee size was less than seven, the school was required to request the student as an extra member which proportionately increased the cost. Approximately eighty committees included students in that first year. The evaluations and responses from the chairpersons, committee members, and school personnel were overwhelmingly positive. The program continued to expand until the financial squeeze brought on by Proposition 13 appeared to prompt a decline in the number of requests.

At this same time there was some participation of educators from the Northwest Association on visiting committees while several experienced WASC committee members served on Northwest committees. This exchange continued for several years. It proved to be of interest but it emphatically confirmed the vast differences in the basic philosophy and approach to accreditation by the two commissions.

In 1976–77 in cooperation with the Business/Industry/Education Council an experiment was conducted to use a representative of business on several visiting committees. The response to this pilot program was very positive, and it continued for several years but the number never exceeded 15 or 20 in any one year. There was difficulty in locating individuals who could devote the necessary time to the visit.

Throughout this period of time the ratings of visiting committee members and chairpersons continued at an unbelievably high level in spite of new programs, changes in procedures, different types of schools entering the program, and increasing numbers of inexperienced persons becoming involved. This was an indication that the quality of the training workshops and the self-study/visitation guidelines were serving the purposes for which they were intended.

Efforts to coordinate the California State Department of Education review responsibilities with the WASC program were continued. In 1976–77 nine high schools volunteered to attempt to correlate the Monitor and Review SDE Visit with the WASC Visit. The evaluation of these pilots by Dr. Sando indicated that the schools' reaction to mixing the two processes was generally negative. In 1979 a joint WASC/SDE School Improvement Program pilot evaluation project was approved. This was a three-year project to which Dr. Sando was assigned as the WASC Consultant. Suzanne Powers, who had extensive experience both as a WASC chairperson and as an SDE

SIP evaluator, agreed to serve as the chairperson of the visiting committee and consultant during the two-year period when a self-study format would be developed and conducted by the school. This project met with mixed success but gave some indications that a joint process might be possible. Several schools used the Castro Valley self-study as a model and with some variations for joint SDE/WASC visits, but no specific form was developed.

An Awards Program was initiated by the Commission in 1977. There were 233 persons who had served on visiting committees ten or more times since the formation of WASC. Each was presented with a Certificate of Service Award. In subsequent years 30 to 40 awards were presented as experienced members reached the goal of ten. Since the first year of the Awards Program coincided with the 15th anniversary of the Commission, all current and past Commission members were invited to a dinner to commemorate the occasion. At that time the practice of awarding WASC medallions to all Commission members was initiated. Special Distinguished Service Awards were presented to Mrs. Barbara Hedge Klingborg and to Dr. William McGowan for their significant contributions to the work of the Commission.

Major expansion in the size of the Commission took place at this time. Two additional members from Hawaii were appointed. Tosh Nakasone, principal of Aiea High School, was nominated by the Hawaii Government Employees Association and served from 1975–81. Joseph Pynchon, Headmaster of Hawaii School for Girls, was nominated by the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools and served from 1975–87. To provide additional teacher representation, the Commission appointed Allen Eggeleston of Hacienda-La Puente Unified School District, a nominee of the California Federation of Teachers, who served from 1975–78. Public representation was provided by the appointment of Ruth Swenson, Fall River, California, in 1978. She was a nominee of the California Congress of Parents and Teachers, continues to serve on the Commission, and is currently the Chairperson of the WASC Board of Directors and President of the Association.

One of the problems resulting from the structuring of the Commission through nominations by several associations was the inability of the Commission to do anything about improving the balance on the Commission in regard to representation of minorities and women. In 1977 guidelines were adopted to be forwarded to each association prior to the time of nomination requesting that this matter be one of the considerations as appointments were being made. These guidelines contributed to an increase in the number of women and minorities who eventually served very ably on the Commission.

During the nine-year period, 1975–84, membership increased from 1,300 schools to 1,997 schools. It is significant to note that 42% of the accredited schools were from the private sector. Approximately 450 of the 700 school increase were in the elementary school category with significant increases also in the continuation and adult high school memberships. The activity in EARCOS doubled from 18 accredited schools to 35. Though small in number, the increase from four to 12 schools in Guam was the highest proportionate increase.

With the growth in membership, there was a corresponding increase in the budget which was accentuated by inflation. The total budget increase was from \$325,000 to \$815,000. Visiting committee expenses increased from an average of \$460 to more than \$1,000. Increases in Visiting Committee fees were proportionate. The annual fee increased from \$150 in 1975 to \$200 in 1984.

In June of 1983 Dr. Siverson announced his intention to retire effective July 1, 1984. The Commission adopted a position announcement and designated a screening committee which reviewed applications and interviewed candidates prior to the January 1984 meeting. At that time the Commission unanimously endorsed the screening committee's recommendation to employ Dr. Don E. Halverson, Assistant Superintendent of San Mateo County Schools, as the next Executive Director.

Dr. Halverson had had extensive experience as a teacher and administrator in the California public schools during which time he served continuously as a Workshop Leader and as a Visiting Committee Chairperson. He had been one of the first persons selected to chair several committees to overseas schools in East Asia. He was thoroughly familiar with all aspects of school planning and evaluation, having taught classes in that subject at San Francisco State University and having been involved in that work at the county and state levels.

Between January and July in 1984, Dr. Halverson and Dr. Siverson were able to spend considerable time together to review and discuss office and Commission procedures. Unfortunately the transition was to be marred by another tragedy, the extended illness of Barbara Hedge Klingborg. Her illness, which proved to be terminal, prevented her from being in the office much of the time. In May she missed a Commission meeting for the first time since its formation in 1962.

In June, Eugene Even retired from the Commission, sixteen years after his initial appointment by CASSA. Sister Cecilia Louise Moore, Associate Superintendent of Education of the Los Angeles Archdiocese, was elected

Chairperson. Dr. E. Thomas Giugni, Superintendent, Long Beach City Schools, was elected Assistant Chairperson.

Don E. Halverson: 1984–1992

One of the immediate problems facing the new Executive Director was the need for additional staffing to compensate for the increased activities attendant with growth and the loss of the services of Mrs. Klingborg. An Associate Director position was approved by the Commission, and Ralph Sleight, formerly the Principal of Gunderson High School in San Jose, was selected. Mr. Sleight had been extensively involved with the accreditation process at the school level and had chaired numerous committees in California and Hawaii. His new responsibilities were evaluation instruments, budget and finance, and computerization of procedures.

Once again the Commission Office found itself growing out of space with no room to expand. Fortunately a new facility was located next door at 1606 Rollins Road, and in February 1985 a move was made to a building which provided 70% more space at a 22% increase in cost. This not only provided adequate office, storage, and work areas, but for the first time space available for growth.

In October the Commission and the staff met for purposes of orientation, planning, and the setting of priorities. One of the results of this meeting was a decision to establish four standing committees. These were: Commission Procedures, Criteria and Evaluation Instruments, Commission Orientation and Education, and Finance. Long range planning and priorities were also discussed.

One of the high priorities was to stress coordination of the SDE review process with the WASC review. After preliminary discussions between the Executive Director and the State Schools Superintendent, Bill Honig addressed the Commission at its January 1985 meeting to indicate areas of possible coordination. Four fundamental concepts were mutually endorsed: The local school would have the option to use or not to use the joint process. Any reports needed by the State for program review would be provided by the school directly to the State. The basic WASC process would be continued, including self-study, peer review, visiting committee composition and selection, and Commission action on term of accreditation. The SDE would use the term of accreditation awarded by the Commission as the basis for its term of program review.

An evaluation instrument was developed which incorporated aspects of the Criteria Approach and the SDE Secondary Program Review Manual. The

self-study document was titled: “Pursuing Excellence: Joint WASC/SDE Procedures for Appraising the California Public High School.” This form was tested in 16 high schools and two junior high schools in the 1985–86 school year. Based on these pilot experiences both the self-study and visitation procedures were reviewed and revised, and in 1986–87 there were 70 schools which opted to use the joint procedures. Responses were generally very favorable. It appeared that the joint WASC/SDE process would soon be used by the vast majority of the schools.

This action prompted another Commission decision with long range implications. The task of reviewing and revising such a large number of evaluation instruments was becoming increasingly time consuming and expensive. Each type of school had multiple forms of instruments with the total being 32. Now yet another instrument was being added to the list. With the rationale that most schools should still use Form A for their first visit, it was decided that Forms B and C should be phased out. After using Form A, schools would then have the choice of using the Criteria Approach or the Joint Procedures.

Similarly, it was determined to phase out the District Plan. For one reason, maximum terms for the SDE reviews were limited to six years which is the usual and maximum WASC term. The longer terms of eight and ten years between self-studies were deemed to be too long in spite of the mid-term and annual reports required as a part of that plan. The eighteen participating districts were notified that the plan was being phased out but that the terms of accreditation already granted to schools in the plan would be honored.

Commencing with the 1986–87 year there was a change in the pattern of workshops. Up to that time, one-half day training workshops for persons involved on visiting committees or in self-study were held at various locations throughout the Region. Following a general meeting the group then divided into specialized sections for chairpersons, school self-study leaders, new and experienced visiting committee members, etc. The new pattern called for workshops at eight locations for self-study coordinators in September and for chairpersons in October. The workshops for visiting committee members were held at 18 locations in January. Special one-to-two-day workshops were held for those participating in the WASC/ SDE Joint Process.

The 1985–86 school year saw an increase in the number of visiting committee members participating from the colleges and universities. A study by the California Postsecondary Education Commission, “Improving College Prep Programs Through High School Accreditation,” had recommended greater involvement of college personnel on high school teams to provide a

closer link and articulation between the two levels. The Commission responded by recommending that, whenever possible, both a junior college and a college or university representative be placed on each seven-member visiting committee. The post-secondary community in turn encouraged college personnel to accept invitations and hold to commitments made to serve on visiting committees. The result was more than a 100% increase in college participation on visiting committees in one year, up from 59 in 1984–85 to 132 in 1985–86.

Early in 1985 the Commission approved a comprehensive plan to computerize office procedures. The plan included word processing capability, which was under way for greater ease in filing, editing, and revising the many evaluation instruments and publications of the Commission. The other elements of the computerization plan were: school records, visiting committee member data base, computer selected visiting committees, and accounts and finance. All parts of the plan have been completed or will be by the 1987–88 school year.

These and other activities are indicative that the evaluation/accreditation program, while continuing to maintain its basic philosophy and approach, is responsive to change and continues to have impact on improving the quality of education throughout the region.

At its 25th year the roster of accredited schools now approaches 2,100, of which 42% are from the private sector. The proportion of private schools to public schools accredited by the other regions ranges from a low of 5% in the Northwest to 28% in the Middle States. There can be no better evidence that the Schools Commission has faithfully implemented the WASC constitutional provision to evaluate and accredit a school based on “the degree to which it is accomplishing the purposes and objectives outlined in its own statement of objectives and on the appropriateness of those functions for an institution of its type” and that the schools and their pupils have been well served.

Acknowledgements

Appreciation is expressed to Dr. Don E. Halverson, Executive Director of the Accrediting Commission for Schools, for the invitation to prepare the History of the Commission for the 25th Anniversary of WASC. The primary sources of information have been the complete files of agenda materials, minutes, and bulletins pertaining to all meetings of the Commission. Appreciation is also expressed to the following persons who provided valuable information and materials about their respective associations, particularly prior to the formation of WASC in 1962: Dr. E. J. Anderson,

Director, Office of Education, Pacific Conference of Seventh-day Adventists; Mrs. Sue Badger, Executive Director, California Association of Independent Schools; Dr. William McGowan, formerly Executive Director, California Association of Secondary School Principals; and Sister Cecilia Louise Moore, President, Western Catholic Education Association.

LYLE E. SIVERSON

Former Executive Director

Accrediting Commission for Schools

THE SECOND 25 YEARS: 1987–2012

Don E. Halverson: 1984–1992

My first experience with WASC began in 1962 when one of the founders and the first Executive Director of the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Les Hedges, asked me to accompany him on a candidate visit to the San Pasqual School District in Winterhaven. From then on, I served annually on many different kinds of visits. When my predecessor, Dr. Lyle Siverson, retired, I became the Executive Director.

The Accrediting Commission for Schools of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges has been very successful since its inception. A major factor in this success has been the employment and support of veteran educators who believed in change rather than the status quo, and who were willing to keep the focus on student improvement through constant evaluation of the learning process.

As laws changed, new materials and programs were developed and the documents of accreditation were also revised and new ones developed. Another major development was the emphasis by the Commission on the selection of new commissioners who would take the time necessary to engage in dialogue and commit to the cause of school improvement.

In 1984, the computer evolution was in full swing, except that all we had was an IBM PC computer with 9-inch disks to begin our transformation. During the next several years, computerizing the office and inputting the lists of participants consumed a large amount of our time and energy.

At the same time, we were focused on bringing all groups of participants to a more symbiotic state — one where we could help private school groups, public school groups, and others desirous of working together with us to improve educational programs and materials for all.

During this time, there were some changes in the number and make-up of the commission membership and procedures. We tried to continue the concept of the commission as a review and decision-making board rather than as a micromanagement group.

We also determined to provide additional support to the overseas group, the East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS). Another area that we developed was helping schools in crisis situations to maintain a degree of normalcy and continued improvement.

As the number of schools we worked with grew, we decided that we needed more office space as well as warehouse space. Ultimately, Dr. Haught was able to find more adequate facilities on a good rental basis, and the office moved to its present location on Airport Boulevard.

My experiences were many and varied. I recall the time that the California Superintendent of Schools, Wilson Riles, wanted us to become part of the state school system or at least work out some arrangement for shared visits and studies. We worked with the state in some aspects of their Elementary School Improvement Project.

Another interesting experience was when several of the teachers at a private school enlisted the support of a Los Angeles television station in trying to discredit their school, especially the school's administration. We were advised of the issue and were able to help defuse the situation in spite of the television hoopla. We were also able to convince the owners and operators that there was some merit in the teachers' position and we were able to help the school make some significant changes.

The overseas school visits were always interesting; here are some memorable anecdotes:

- A candidate visit to a CIA School in Thailand during the heat of the Vietnam War. My wife and I were not permitted to mix with the other passengers but were picked up as the plane began to taxi to the runway. The students were not allowed to play on the playground because of the cobras. The cafeteria was also the officers club where we ate as the flyers returned from their bombing missions to Laos and Vietnam. (It took me back to my own days as a B-25 pilot during WW2.)
- A school in a copper mine area in the Irian Jaya section of Indonesia (once known as Dutch New Guinea) where the natives wore only grass skirts and penis gourds for clothing and dug for yams around the compounds.
- The realization that in many of the schools money was not a problem. An example was the issuance of a computer to each student as he/she enrolled in the Hong Kong International School. Their new high school was paid for in cash before it was built.

Many times I have been asked which schools were the best. My answer was always, "where the money was; not whether the school was public or private." The best school I ever saw was a public school and the worst was a private school to which accreditation was denied. It wasn't how the school

was funded or by whom. It was good people with ample funds to provide the resources and hire the quality teachers and administrators to implement the programs they knew to be successful.

I rate my almost nine years with the commission as the most rewarding of my 42-year career in the education business. Working with educators from all kinds of schools, public, private, or parochial, all striving to help schools improve so that their students could realize their highest potentials often under great odds really continually inspired me. If “work” can be “fun” as well as rewarding, striving with the quality educators in WASC is such a place.

Donald Haugt: 1993–2002

I became Executive Director of ACS WASC in January 1993, just six years after the celebration of the 25th anniversary of WASC. My first awareness of WASC was in 1964, when as a new teacher in California, my school was just completing the process and the staff was invited to hear the Visiting Committee’s reading of the report. As the chair of the committee read the report of recommendations and commendations in a most serious voice, I was greatly impressed by the efficiency and accuracy with which the committee summarized the strengths and weaknesses of the school. I was inspired by that experience to respond positively a few years later when I was asked to serve on a committee.

Subsequently, I served on about 20 committees before becoming the Executive Director. I was constantly impressed with the amount of information the committees could collect, analyze, and report on in the short marathon visits. Much of my professional development can be attributed to my participation on these committees. During each visit, I learned something that could be used back in my district, and I was able to network with some of the most talented, committed people in our profession.

Some of the events that occurred during my time at WASC include the development of the *Focus on Learning* (FOL) protocol, the integration of the WASC/CDE review process, the engagement of charter schools in the WASC process, moving to the offices on Airport Boulevard, addition of a commission member from the private sector, and the purchase of an office building in Temecula to establish a branch office in Southern California.

During my time as Executive Director, I became increasingly impressed with the founders of WASC. These were men of great insight who established a wonderful plan for accrediting schools and assisting schools to improve themselves through self-analysis. In the document, “History of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges 1962–87” by Lyle Siverson, the former

Executive Director of ACS, Dr. Siverson, with the help of others, relates the early history of the association. Reading this work, one cannot help admiring their early efforts and dedication.

During my days at WASC, I was regularly impressed with the professionalism and competence of the commissioners with whom I had the privilege of serving. These hard working folks regularly and cheerfully read a myriad of school reports and consistently rendered decisions and recommendations that were sound and productive. They were a harmonious group, tightly focused on the mission of WASC.

There is something magical about the nature of the WASC and its commissioners that results in great benefit to the schools it serves and to society. I am proud that I had the opportunity to be an integral part of this endeavor for ten years.

WASC has prevailed through good and difficult times for education in its 50-year history. I hope and believe it will endure as a positive force for high-quality education for another half century.

In the 1993–2003 decade, the following developments occurred:

- The WASC newsletter was renamed, changing it from “You Might Be Interested” to “WASC Words.”
- The *Focus on Learning* protocol was developed transitioning from *In Search of Excellence*.
- WASC engaged with the California Department of Education to develop a protocol that would allow public schools going through WASC accreditation to use the WASC review to meet the criteria for the state required review program.
- The main WASC office was moved from the Rollins Road warehouse district to the current Airport Boulevard Office complex.
- The commission report reading procedures were changed to allow the commission to handle more efficiently the increasing number of visit reports that required review.
- The notion of a “consent agenda” was also incorporated to speed up commission agendas.
- The length of the regular commission meetings was reduced by one day.
- The rigor of the review procedure was strengthened resulting in an increased number of midterm reviews.

- A good size financial reserve was developed and used to purchase an office building in Temecula for use as a Southern California office.
- A private citizen (non educator) member was added to the commission.
- The commission broadened the type of institutions that were eligible for consideration for accreditation including proprietary schools, employment training centers, tutorial centers, and a wide range of charter schools.
- The first on-line school was accredited by WASC in 1997.
- ACS maintained its endorsement by the US Department of Education as an accrediting agency allowing WASC to accredit certain postsecondary institutions.
- WASC accredited its first Mexican school.
- An employee health insurance program was implemented.
- A certified auditor was employed to do an annual audit.
- We moved from “mainframe dumb terminal” computers to desktop central server model increasing the flexibility and speed of operations.
- WASC standardized the office software to Microsoft.
- WASC developed special WASC protocols for a myriad of membership groups such as Hawaii public schools, California private schools, and California protestant religious schools.

David E. Brown: 2003–present

Now that I am beginning to see a distant light at the end of the “proverbial” employment tunnel and because we are celebrating 50 years of service to schools, I wish to reflect briefly on my years as Executive Director of the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC). I came to WASC finding all in order. Don Haught had continued the excellent leadership of those before him, including Lyle Siverson and Don Halverson, who led the WASC cause during years I served as Chair of a number of Visiting Committees. I actually also served on the ACS WASC Commission during Don Haught’s reign, so I have an up-close and personal perspective on his strong skills and leadership. My portion of this 50-year summary is being captured by categories, rather than by a sequenced timeline.

To say the least, my experience with ACS WASC has been thoroughly enjoyable. Obviously there were times usually associated with legal issues or school denials that might paint this particular service opportunity as being somewhat less inviting; nonetheless, working with quality educators throughout the WASC region, and with ACS WASC staff members whose work can be consistently tagged with the seal of excellence has been absolutely delightful. I deeply believe in the purpose and achievements of our organization and attribute our success to the work of a very large cadre of educators who are absolutely dedicated to high-quality learning for the students and schools we serve. Included in that cadre are both members of staff and those volunteers who are the very foundation of our success.

Work with other Accrediting Agencies

I was appointed Executive Director in June of 2002. However, Don Haught requested that we make the transition at the end of the calendar year, so I remained as Superintendent of the Napa Valley Unified School District for an additional six months. Although I was not formally employed by ACS WASC until January of 2003, I worked often with Don and his incredibly faithful and highly competent co-worker, Judy Abbott, in the fall of 2002. One of the opportunities associated with my pre-employment work was representing ACS WASC at the EARCOS Conference, which that year was in Beijing, China. I discovered there that the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) had determined to become active in China and in other countries of Asia; thereby creating a bit more of a competitive environment for WASC in Asia, nonetheless, our relationship through the last decade have been collaborative, and we have avoided serious conflict in working in the same region.

Another experience in the fall of 2002 involved my attendance at a Commission on International and Trans-regional Accreditation (CITA) Board meeting in Arizona. CITA was established in 1996 for purposes of creating a common basis for accrediting schools with a corporate base, most of which were tutorial-based support programs that we identified as Supplementary Educational Programs (SEPs). Included among them were the Sylvan Learning Centers, the Huntington Learning Centers, and Nobel Learning Systems. At that meeting, I discovered that all regional commissions except NEASC had signed on to become part of CITA, as NEASC also had plans for becoming active in the Middle East with international schools. Meetings of the CITA typically featured a sharing of protocols and discussions of common challenges.

ACS WASC also developed a set of common standards for use with both international and trans-regional educational agencies. That relationship was

challenged often by both NEASC and the European Council of International Schools (ECIS) for practices of “selling accreditation,” particularly in countries in Asia. The issue dealt with grandfathering schools with CITA accreditation that already had been accredited by one of the five regional commissions. The process seemed harmless enough, but was perceived very aggressively by ECIS and NEASC as unethical.

The five commission collaboration of CITA came to an abrupt end when the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the North Central Association (NCA) announced the formation of a union created to combine their two agencies, referred to as AdvancEd. It had been the desire of the founder of AdvancEd that all of us join the AdvancEd movement. Northwest, WASC, NEASC, and Middle States chose not to join with AdvancEd, and created the Alliance to further our own interests of sustaining regionalized accreditation and to stave off the aggressive efforts of AdvancEd to move out of their traditional regions to cover other states. After one year of some confusion regarding SEPs, virtually all of them returned to WASC and Middle States and continue to be accredited by us. In fact, since Northwest chose not to expand beyond their own states, Middle States and WASC decided to share work with SEPs (using the Mississippi River as the border between us) that chose not to be accredited by AdvancEd.

The relationships with AdvancEd have not improved, and AdvancEd continues to actively recruit schools in our various regions. One final change in the evolution of regional accreditation involved the decision of the Northwest Association to join with AdvancEd in 2011. That decision actually strengthened the resolve of WASC, Middle States, and NEASC, joined by the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA), to collaborate even more actively on the goals of sustaining regional accreditation and sharing best practices. To date, the only successful acquisition for AdvancEd in the WASC region was the transition from WASC to AdvancEd of the public schools in Saipan.

Relationships with the Federal Department of Education

ACS WASC was formally recognized for many years by the Federal Department of Education through an authorization process managed by the National Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI). Each time we were reviewed for reauthorization/recognition, we experienced a challenge in dealing with NACIQI as their consultants assigned to WASC were repeatedly changed. WASC accredits approximately 250 postsecondary schools and institutions that are non-degree granting, and which primarily focus on employment skill training. Of the 250 institutions, including many adult schools in California and Hawaii, only 30 to 40 received Title IV

funding from the federal government. Accreditation from a USDOE “recognized” accrediting agency has been the gateway to Title IV funding, but because so few of the schools WASC accredits actually benefit from Title IV, ACS WASC opted to withdraw from the “recognition” process in 2010. This decision was made at a time when new preparation efforts were being demanded by NACIQI, prompting staff to recommend that we formally withdraw. In 2011, a partnership was formed between ACS WASC and the Commission on Occupational Education (COE) out of Atlanta to dually accredit schools seeking to receive Title IV funding. Currently 38 WASC accredited postsecondary schools are either dually accredited or are working towards dual WASC/COE accreditation.

Growth and Territorial Expansion

WASC currently extends its services to over 4,500 schools. That number in 2002 was 2,800. The significant growth is attributable primarily to the expansion of charter schools in California and Hawaii and the creation of Small Learning Communities (SLCs) from large high schools. A decision of the University of California Office of the President to only allow accredited high schools to submit coursework for purposes of a-g admissions approval has also encouraged a number of previously non-accredited schools to discover the value of the ACS WASC protocol.

The number of schools ACS WASC accredits in the countries of Asia and Pacific Islands is expanding. We continue to accredit a school in South Africa, and one in Australia, both of which were at one time managed by the International School Development Foundation, an organization that manages schools in Shanghai and Jakarta. New schools in countries of Asia are being opened with great frequency. To the credit of WASC staff and a number of WASC-a-teers in the region, the vast majority of those new schools have opted to become accredited by us.

Very recently, a discussion has begun to review whether or not ACS WASC should more actively seek opportunities to accredit schools outside of our traditional Asian region. We have been requested to consider working in India and in several countries of the Middle East.

Technological Advances

The use of technology has been enhanced exponentially over the last several years. In 2002, ACS WASC had primary technology support from an individual who created our initial database and website. The website was pretty much “under construction” for the most part, but the website, in spite of some challenges from time-to-time, was serving us relatively well. As indicated, the system was the creation of a single individual who seemed to

create new and novel solutions each time we faced a challenge with the system. We knew we were in need of a longer-term solution to effectively utilize technology.

Late in 2003, we became aware of a private school that had utilized our *Focus on Learning* (FOL) protocol to create an online reporting option for their school's self-study. Armed with questions of potential theft of "intellectual property," Marilyn George and I boldly marched into the offices of the individual responsible for this dastardly action. To make a very long story significantly shorter, we quickly discovered in our conversations with Pascal Kaplan that perhaps he and his organization, iCoHere, could provide a realistic next step for enhancing all of our technology, including the database and our website. We subsequently contracted with iCoHere and the result was a much more user-friendly database, a website that is up-to-date and useable, and a communications system that maximizes the use of webinars for training purposes and other meetings.

We are now in the final phase of a requirements analysis to determine our next technological steps. The analysis is being completed by iCoHere, but the expectations of our next phase of enhancements will be distributed to a number of vendors for bids. Meanwhile, our system has been updated in Temecula so that both the Burlingame and Temecula offices have relatively rapid connectivity.

On the commission level, we have discontinued copying Visiting Committee reports and now download them to iPads made available to each of our present 30 commissioners. The use of Dropbox delivery to the iPads is saving time, money, and the commissioners' unnecessary back pain associated with schlepping hundreds of pounds of reports to each commission meeting.

ACS WASC Personnel

At the time of my arrival in 2002, WASC enjoyed the services of George Bronson, who served as Associate Executive Director in the Temecula office from 2000 to 2010. George was strongly supported by Warren Stephenson, who served WASC faithfully for many years as a volunteer and then for approximately 10 years as a paid coordinator in the south. Both George and Warren retired in 2010 and were replaced by Lee Duncan, Associate Executive Director, and Ginger Hovenic, Director of School and Member Relations, Southern California, in Temecula. Lee previously served as a dean at the Masters College and came to WASC in 2010 with a great deal of experience in private schools. Ginger also arrived in 2010 and had most recently served as the Executive Director of the San Diego area Business

Roundtable. She had also served as a charter school principal in San Diego and as the head of a school in London.

Other staff changes occurred in both the Temecula and Burlingame offices. New employees hired over the last ten years include Alicia Adauto, Michelle Allen, Emily Barton, Denise Jagoda, and Tiffany Thomas in Temecula; and Lisa Blaylock, Joanne Cacicedo, Alice Hauser, Susan Lange, Cynthia Newton, Michelle Nunes, Mitchell Peck, Sheléne Peterson, and Rachel Spetman in the Burlingame office. Those with significant tenure in Burlingame, who have watched the growth and the accrual of increased importance of WASC work, are three valued employees whose contributions cannot be overstated — Judy Abbott, Marilyn George, and Lino Gantan. Continuing employees vital to the success of ACS WASC who have served more than ten years include Cris Lunny, Frances Rivette, Sylvia Taylor, and Cristine Toti.

On a sad note, ACS WASC lost the services of an excellent employee and friend when Jess Whipple passed away of a sudden heart attack in May of 2012. Jess was a loyal employee who served WASC for many years, beginning in the business office over 20 years ago and becoming the organization's Chief Financial Officer in 1995.

Partnerships with ACS WASC

The number of formal partnerships with other accrediting agencies has grown now to 15. Included are the following:

- Association of Christian Schools International
- Association of Christian Teachers and Schools
- Association of Waldorf Schools of North America
- Bureau of Jewish Education of Greater Los Angeles
- California Association of Independent Schools
- California Department of Education
- Council of International Schools
- Council on Occupational Education
- Golden State Association of Christian Schools
- East Asia Regional Council of Schools
- Hawaii Department of Education
- Hawaii Association of Independent Schools
- National Lutheran School Association
- Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists
- Western Catholic Educational Association

Formal Memorandums of Understanding that outline our collaborative working relationships are maintained and updated as needed. All of the organizations with which we have formal Memorandums of Understanding are represented on the ACS WASC Commission.

Several other important partnerships include the aforementioned relationships we enjoy with CIS, NCPA, and NEASC and Middle States Commissions in the Alliance. The Alliance has become an important opportunity for us to support common interests with two other regional commissions and several national and international organizations that believe in regional accrediting bodies and in honoring agreed-upon stateside boundaries for our work. We also continue to benefit from an active working relationship with the East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS) that represents most of the schools we accredit in the Pacific Islands and Asia.

We recently completed some consulting work with the Ministry of Education in Qatar, and depending on the outcome of discussions involving potential expansion of our operational territory, we could become more formally partnered with this country's educational system.

Commission Membership and Leadership

ACS WASC has benefitted from exceptional volunteer leadership over the last 10 years. In order of their appearance, commission chairs have included John Fitzpatrick, Christina Dyer, Gary Davis, Tom Beecher, Dale Mitchell, and Harlan Lyso. Besides bringing capable organizational skills to their responsibilities, these Chairs enjoyed the strong support of commission members with whom it has been an absolute pleasure to serve. One of the clear distinctions between the large group of Board members who serve on the ACS WASC Commission and most public and private school governance bodies is the absence of political infighting. Members of the commission consistently demonstrate their single agenda interest — how can we best serve the quality of education for students in public and private schools in our region! Commission members are hard-working, thoughtful and reflective, and demonstrate a dedicated commitment to the work of accrediting schools. The success of the organization is attributable to having over 50 years capable ACS WASC staff members in every category who are consistently supported by caring and competent commission members. This distinction is noteworthy and gives us confidence that the valuable contributions of ACS WASC to the development of quality learning and quality institutions will move ahead boldly into the future.

Accrediting Commissions for Schools in Photographs



Leslie W. Hedge, Executive Secretary
1962–1968



J. Wesley Berry, Executive Secretary
1968–1975



Lyle E. Siverson, Executive Director
1975–1984



Don E. Halverson, Executive Director
1984–1992



Donald G. Haught, Executive Director
1993–2002



David Brown, Executive Director
2003–present



1986 ACS WASC Commission



1989 ACS WASC Commission Awards



1991 ACS WASC Commission



1992 ACS WASC Commission



1996 ACS WASC Commission



2005 ACS WASC Commissioner Awards



2006 ACS WASC Commission Honors
Richard Krajczar



2007 ACS WASC Commission Awards



2008 ACS WASC Commission Awards



2009 ACS WASC Commission Awards



2010 ACS WASC Commission Awards



2011 ACS WASC Commission Awards



David Brown, Executive Director
2003–present



Associate Director, Marilyn George
1987–present



Associate Director, Lee Duncan
2010–present



ACS WASC Burlingame Staff, 2012



ACS WASC Temecula Staff, 2012



ACS WASC Burlingame Office



ACS WASC Temecula Office



2012 ACS WASC Commission



2012 ACS WASC Commission Awards



ACS WASC Summer 2012 Commission Meeting



2012 ACS WASC Commission Awards



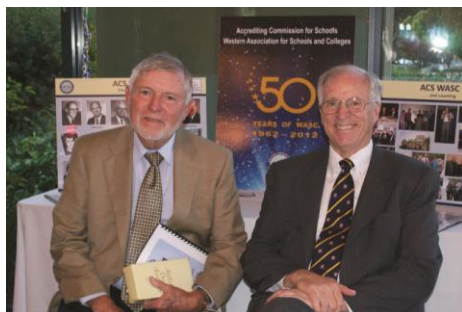
2012 ACS WASC Commission Awards



2012 ACS WASC 50-Year Celebration



Guest of Honor Don Haught



Don Haught and David Brown at the 2012 ACS WASC 50-Year Celebration



Chairperson Harlan Lyso at the 2012 ACS WASC 50-Year Celebration



Executive Director David Brown at the 2012 ACS WASC 50-Year Celebration

APPENDICES

ORIGINAL WASC CONSTITUTION, 1962
Western Association of Schools and Colleges
As approved January 24, 1962

ARTICLE I. Name and Purpose

This organization shall be entitled WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES. Its purpose is to promote the welfare, interests and development of secondary and higher education through the continued improvement of the educational program, close cooperation between the secondary schools and the colleges and universities within the territory it undertakes to serve, and effective working relationships with other educational organizations and accrediting agencies.

ARTICLE II. Territory and Membership

Section 1. The territory of the Association shall consist of the states of California and Hawaii, the Territory of Guam, and such other areas of the Pacific as may apply to it for service. Other states may come within the territory of the Association upon application and approval.

Section 2. Any university, college or secondary school shall be admitted to membership in the Association upon recommendation by the appropriate Accrediting Commission. Such membership shall cease if at any time the university, college or secondary school resigns or is dropped from the approved list of the Association.

ARTICLE III. Organization

Section 1. Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall consist of nine persons, three to be selected from each of the three Accrediting Commissions hereinafter named and described. Representatives of the Accrediting Commission for Secondary Schools shall be chosen from Commission members representing high schools. The Board shall elect its chairman from among its members, for a one-year term. The Chairman may be re-elected for one additional one-year term, but may not serve more than two one-year terms in succession. The Chairman of the Board shall be the President of the Association. The Secretary-Treasurer of the Association shall be selected by the Board.

Section 2. Accrediting Commissions.

- a. *Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities.* This Commission shall consist of six persons appointed by the Executive Committee of the Western College Association for staggered terms of three years, one of whom shall be named Chairman by the Executive Committee of the Western College Association; one person appointed by the Accrediting Commission for Secondary Schools; one person appointed by the Accrediting Commission for Junior Colleges; and the President of the Western College Association, ex-officio. The Executive Secretary of the Commission shall be appointed by the Commission.
- b. *Accrediting Commission for Junior Colleges.* This Commission shall consist of five persons appointed by the California Junior College Association for staggered terms of three years, one of whom shall be named Chairman by the Executive Committee of California Junior Colleges Association; two persons appointed by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities; one person appointed by the Accrediting Commission for Secondary Schools; and one person appointed by the California State Department of Education. The

- Executive Secretary of the Commission shall be appointed by the Commission.
- c. *Accrediting Commission for Secondary Schools.* This Commission shall consist of thirteen persons appointed for staggered terms of three years. The Commission shall include four persons from the independent and parochial schools, to be appointed as follows: one representative selected by the California Association of Independent Schools; two representatives selected by the Catholic schools; and one representative selected by the Seventh-day Adventist schools, with subsequent representation from private and parochial schools to be determined by the Commission itself. The Commission shall also include two persons to represent the California Association of School Administrators; four persons to represent the California Association of Secondary School Administrators; one person to represent the California State Department of Education; one person to represent the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities; and one person to represent the Accrediting Commission for Junior Colleges. The Commission shall elect its own Chairman. The Executive Secretary of the Commission shall be appointed by the Commission.
 - d. Each Accrediting Commission shall be responsible for maintaining its own administrative structure and fiscal policy.

ARTICLE IV. Accreditation Standards

Section 1. Each of the Commissions shall adopt its own statement of standards and criteria, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors of the Association. The standards for accreditation shall clearly guarantee that each institution is to be evaluated on the basis of the degree to which it is accomplishing the purposes and functions outlined in its own statement of objectives, and on the appropriateness of those purposes and functions for an institution of its type.

Section 2. The action on accreditation by each Commission shall be final, subject only to appeal to the Board of Directors. Such an appeal for reconsideration may be instituted either by the institution concerned or by any member of the Commission making the original decision.

ARTICLE V. Duties of Officers

Section 1. The Chairman of the Board of Directors shall preside at all meetings of the Board and shall have the right to vote on all issues that come before the Board for decision. As President of the Association he shall be the official spokesman for the Association, representing the Association in accord with policy established by each of the three Accrediting Commissions.

Section 2. The Secretary-Treasurer shall serve as the Secretary of the Board of Directors and shall maintain a complete file of Minutes and Board decisions. He shall receive from the Secretaries of the three Commissions the lists of accredited institutions and shall provide for the publication of a total Association list of accredited institutions at least once each year.

Section 3. The Secretary of each of the three Commissions shall maintain a careful record of the actions and decisions of his Commission, shall be responsible under his Commission's direction for the scheduling of accreditation visits, appointment of visiting committees, distribution of necessary accreditation materials, and for such other matters as his Commission may delegate to him for the effective administration of the accreditation program. Following each meeting of his Commission at which accreditation decisions are made, the Secretary shall

promptly notify the Secretary of the Board of Directors of all changes in the list of accredited institutions.

ARTICLE VI. Financing

Financial support for the work of the Board of Directors of the Association shall be obtained by equal assessment on each of the three Accrediting Commissions.

ARTICLE VII. Amendments

This constitution may be amended only through the unanimous vote of the three Commissions, a two-thirds vote of each Commission being sufficient for the decision.

ACS WASC EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

YEARS SERVED	NAME
1961–1968	Leslie W. Hedge
1968–1975	J. Wesley Berry
1975–1984	Lyle E. Siverson
1984–1992	Don E. Halverson
1993–2002	Donald G. Haught
2003–present	David E. Brown

ACS WASC COMMISSION CHAIRPERSONS

YEARS SERVED	NAME and ORGANIZATION REPRESENTED
1962–1966	Donovan E. Cartwright, CASSA
1966–1970	Erwin A. Dann, CASA
1970–1975	Robert D. Morgans, CASSA/ACSA
1975–1984	Eugene B. Even, CASSA/ACSA
1984–1986	Sister Cecelia Louise Moore, WCEA
1986–1988	E. Tom Giugni, ACSA
1988–1990	E. J. Anderson, SDA
1990–1992	Robert S. Watt, ACSA
1992–1994	Moss Ikeda, Hawaii Department of Education
1994–1996	Thomas H. Robinson, ACSA
1996–1997	David F. Rittmann, EARCOS
1997–1999	Judith L. Endeman, ACSA
1999–2001	Gerry E. Thompson, SDA
2001–2003	John Fitzpatrick, ACSA
2003–2005	Christina Dyer, Public Member
2005–2007	Gary Davis, ACSA
2007–2009	Thomas C. Beecher, WCEA
2009–2011	Dale Mitchell, ACSA
2011–present	Dr. Harlan Lyso, EARCOS



YEARS OF WASC

