

How Link Crew Aligns with Accrediting Commissions for Schools

Accreditation is a voluntary process that schools undergo to ensure that they are (1) worthy of the trust placed in them to provide high quality learning opportunities and (2) clearly demonstrating continual self-improvement. There are six regional accreditation agencies in the United States:

- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools,
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges,
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools,
- Northwestern Association of Accredited Schools,
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and,
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Most accreditation standards are common among accrediting agencies. Below is a list of some of the key standards of accreditation for the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and Canada's Standards in Excellence and Learning, with which Link Crew aligns.

WASC STANDARD: ORGANIZATION

STAFF

The school leadership and staff are qualified for their assigned responsibilities, are committed to the school's purpose and engage in ongoing professional development that promotes student learning.

HOW LINK CREW ALIGNS WITH STAFF TRAINING AND LEADERSHIP

The Link Crew Coordinator training not only improves classroom instruction, it also trains the coordinators to take leadership roles within the school, district, and professional community. Trained Link Crew Coordinators experience positive personal and professional transformations, a shared responsibility for student achievement and strengthened connections and communication between staff and students.

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The school has a safe, healthy, nurturing environment that reflects the school's purpose and is characterized by respect for differences, trust, caring, professionalism support, and high expectations for each student.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

The school leadership facilitates school improvement which (a) is driven by plans of action that will enhance quality learning for all students (b) has school community support and involvement, (c) effectively guides the work of the school, and (d) provides for accountability through monitoring of the school-wide action plan.

HOW LINK CREW ALIGNS WITH SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

Link Crew helps improve overall school culture. Hundreds of schools have watched as their student bodies have become more connected, more spirited and kinder to each other.

Because of the diversity of the leaders, Link Crew gives students who would otherwise not socialize with each other a common purpose and a common goal, thus diminishing antagonism that might exist between these groups. Link Crew Leaders are positive, natural leaders from a broad social cross-section so student leadership is shared by a variety of groups on your campus and the climate reflects that.

Additional Information and Documents:

- Logic Model
- 40 Assets
- CASEL
- 11 Principles of Character Education

WASC STANDARD: SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

STUDENT CONNECTEDNESS

Students are connected to a system of support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community that meet the challenges of the curricular and co-curricular program in order to achieve the expected school-wide learning results. The school is a) a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning and b) has a culture that is characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement.

All students receive appropriate support along with an individualized learning plan to help ensure academic success. Students have access to a system of personal support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The school leadership employs a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's established support system for students.

HOW LINK CREW ALIGNS WITH SUPPORT FOR STUDENT CONNECTEDNESS

Link Crew gives students the permission to care about each other and the structure in which to do it. By connecting upperclassmen and freshmen with structure and training to make the relationship meaningful, students have the opportunity to focus on the important aspects of their lives.

Specifically, Link Crew helps address the three fundamental transition needs that students have: safety, information and connection. In many high schools, the focus is on keeping students safe by keeping bad things from entering the school environment. As a result, money and resources are invested in security to seal off the school.

Those inside our high schools, however, know that the far greater issue for students is keeping them safe from the negative forces within the school walls and halls. Bullying, rumors, isolation, and harassment are far more likely to pose safety risks on the average campus than external violence. Link Crew allows students to have a trusted source of safety from their first moments at their school. The more connected students are to their new school, the better they will do in all measures that are important in tracking their success: grades, test scores, attendance, and discipline. All these measures are positively affected when students are connected.

Schools try to promote this crucial component of transition by offering co-curricular activities, athletics, and special events in the hopes that kids will connect. Unlike the two other components to a successful transition, this one is left to chance. Even the most robust co-curricular programs only involve a percentage of the students. Link Crew creates a structure that connects every incoming freshman with a caring upperclassman from their first day through the end of their freshman year.

Social Follow-ups are events organized by the Link Crew Coordinator team in which the freshmen and Leaders attend fun school sponsored social events together.