

# NJAIS Standards for Accreditation

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The NJAIS Standards consist of these major sections:

- I. Mission/Philosophy
- II. Institutional Leadership
- III. Educational Program
- IV. Technology
- V. Advancement
- VI. Finance and Operations
- VII. Residential Schools / Homestay Programs (if applicable)
- VIII. Schools Affiliated with Religious Organizations/Faith-Based Institutions (if applicable)

## **I. MISSION/PHILOSOPHY**

### **A. Mission/Philosophy**

- 1. The school has a clearly stated mission/philosophy statement that is reviewed periodically and approved by the Board of Trustees.
- 2. The mission/philosophy informs school decisions and programs.
- 3. The school communicates its mission/philosophy to all constituents.

### **B. School Climate and Culture**

- 4. The climate and culture of the school reflect the school's mission/philosophy.

### **C. Community Relations**

- 5. The school strives to maintain good relationships with the community in which it is located.

### **D. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

- 6. In keeping with its mission/philosophy, the school promotes an equitable, just, and inclusive community that inspires students to respect others and value diversity.

### **E. Global Awareness**

7. The school strives to promote a culture of global understanding that is appropriate to the school's mission, size, and means.

### **F. Environmental Stewardship**

8. The school strives to promote a commitment to environmental responsibility and stewardship for current and future generations.

## **II. INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

### **A. Governance**

9. The school is incorporated as a non-profit organization and has been granted by the Internal Revenue Service 501(c)3 status or an equivalent form of tax-exempt status.
10. The school and its governance structure are organized with appropriate independence from other organizations or individuals as to ensure its ability to fulfill its mission and plan for its future.
11. The Board reviews and maintains Bylaws and keeps minutes of meetings that conform to laws and regulations.
12. The Board develops and regularly reviews Board written policies in a Policy Manual.
13. The Board has sole fiduciary responsibility for the school and ensures that adequate financial resources and facilities are provided for the institution.
14. The Board has appropriate policies and procedures to support the creation, review, and approval of an annual operating and capital budget, as well as short and long-range financial plans.
15. The Board engages in regular strategic planning and documents in writing the elements of that plan.
16. The Board understands its central role in development/institutional advancement and actively supports these efforts.

17. The Board demonstrates effective boundaries between the policy-making role of the Board and the role of the Head of School as educational leader and manager of school day-to-day operations.
18. The Board provides a written contract for the Head of School that sets forth major responsibilities, a mutually agreed upon plan of evaluation of the Head, compensation and benefits, the term of employment, a required termination notice, and ensures the Head's right to address the Board with regard to situations in which the Head's position might be at risk.
19. The Board ensures stability in transitions of Head and Board leadership and provides transition planning.
20. The Board has an effective process to identify, cultivate, and select new members to its Board.
21. The school provides for the orientation of new trustees and requires ongoing professional development for the Board of Trustees as a whole.
22. The Board has a regular, clearly defined, and well-administered program of annual evaluation for itself as an entity and for individual Board members.
23. The Board reviews annually and members sign individually a conflict of interest and confidentiality statement.
24. The Board ensures that the school has adequate provision for risk assessment, mitigation, and management, including regular review of best risk mitigation practices and the transfer of liability, property, and casualty risk through appropriate insurance.
25. The Board carries Directors' and Officers' insurance and annually reviews the policy.

## **B. Administration**

26. The administration is organized in a manner that enables it to carry out the mission/philosophy of the school.
27. Faculty, administration, and staff members are sufficient in number to accomplish the work for which they are responsible.
28. The school provides ongoing opportunities for professional growth.

29. The school has a clearly defined and well-administered process for supervision and evaluation of faculty, administration, and staff.
30. There are clearly articulated channels by which members of all constituency groups (including faculty, parents, students, alumnae/i) can communicate meaningfully with school administrators.

### **C. Human Resources**

31. The Head of School determines that all the members of the faculty, administration, and staff are qualified for their positions and responsibilities, and are committed to the mission/philosophy of the school.
32. The school conducts pre-employment fingerprint clearance and comprehensive background checks on all employees, volunteers, and vendors who are in a position to have unaccompanied, routine contact with students.
33. Personnel practices provide ethical treatment among all faculty, administrators, and staff with respect to compensation, workloads, and working conditions.

## **III. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

### **1. Curriculum and Instruction**

34. All school programs (including early childhood, residential (boarding and homestay), extended care, online, etc.) stem from the school's beliefs about teaching and learning, are consistent with the mission/philosophy of the school, and are reviewed regularly.
35. Congruent with the school's mission/philosophy, the school's programs demonstrate consideration for intellectual, social, physical, aesthetic, and ethical education of students. The program encourages freedom of inquiry, respects diversity of viewpoints, and promotes critical thinking.
36. The school demonstrates responsible and ongoing understanding of current educational research and best practices consistent with its mission.
37. The school provides evidence of a thoughtful process, respectful of its mission, for the collection and use in school decision-making of data (internal and external) about student learning, for both current and past students.

38. The school has a clear process for evaluating individual student progress and reporting to parents or guardians on a periodic basis.

## **2. Support Services: Learning Support, Counseling, Advising, Health, and Wellness**

39. Consistent with its mission/philosophy, the school's program has sufficient range for the learning styles, developmental needs, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds of the students enrolled in the school.

40. The school provides advisory, guidance, and counseling services to its students that are consistent with its mission/philosophy, either directly or through referral.

41. The school provides appropriate health services for students and employees that are administered and carried out by personnel who have appropriate training and experience.

42. The school has a process to ensure that it demonstrates compliance with all statutory regulations.

## **3. Discipline**

43. Discipline practices are humane and mindful of the inherent dignity in every student. Corporal punishment is not an acceptable practice.

## **4. Secondary School and College and Career Counseling**

44. The school has in place a procedure for follow-up on graduate success, and utilizes resulting data to assess its goals and programs.

## **5. Co-Curricular Activities and Athletics**

45. The co-curricular activities reflect the mission/philosophy of the school.

## **IV. TECHNOLOGY**

46. The school has an effective information technology program that addresses communication, administration, and instruction.

## **V. ADVANCEMENT**

### **A. Enrollment Management: Admissions, Retention, and Financial Aid**

- 47. The school's admissions policies and procedures both reflect and enhance the school's mission.
- 48. The school invests adequate institutional resources in its efforts to promote parent satisfaction and support robust student retention.
- 49. The school's financial aid program both reflects and enhances the school's mission.

### **B. Marketing and Communications**

- 50. The school's marketing and communications plans serve to strengthen the school's reputation both internally and in the broader community.
- 51. The school employs methods of communicating with its stakeholders that are appropriate to the school's mission, size, and means.

### **C. Development/Fundraising**

- 52. The school's development efforts are well coordinated, congruent with the school's mission/philosophy, and adequately support the current and future needs of the school.
- 53. The school engages key constituents including parents, alumni, and other members of the community in advancement activities congruent with its mission/philosophy.

## **VI. FINANCE AND OPERATIONS**

### **A. School Finance and Financial Management**

- 54. The school has sufficient resources to meet its financial needs.
- 55. The school has appropriate policies and procedures for managing the financial resources of the school.
- 56. The financial responsibilities of parents/guardians are stated and published.

## **B. Facilities**

57. The school's facilities and grounds are adequate to support its mission and program and are responsibly maintained.

## **C. Safety**

58. The school is safe, healthy, and secure for all members of the school community. Effective and well-established policies and procedures exist and are acted upon to protect children and adults alike.
59. Preventative and emergency health, safety, and security procedures are clear and well documented, and include a crisis management plan for both on and off-campus activities.

## **D. Record Keeping**

60. The school has policies and procedures that govern the retention, maintenance, and use of personnel, financial, corporate, legal, health and safety, and student records, including print and digital records. All records are protected against catastrophic loss and are available only to authorized personnel.

## **VII. RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS/ HOMESTAY PROGRAMS(if applicable)**

Note: Residential schools refer to boarding schools.

Homestay students refer to enrolled students who reside off campus with host families, not with parents or other relatives or legal guardians, regardless of whether they are placed by an agency or not.

61. The school's residential/homestay programs reflect and enhance the school's mission, provide a rich experience for students, and are integrated into the life of the school community as a whole.
62. The school's residential/homestay programs are staffed appropriately, particularly with respect to the portion of the day outside regular classroom hours, including evening, weekend, and vacation activities. Health, safety, and communication with parents are under the purview of the school.
63. The school provides for the particular needs of its international students.

## **VIII. SCHOOLS AFFILIATED WITH RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS/FAITH-BASED INSTITUTIONS**

64. The independent religiously-affiliated/faith-based school provides in its Bylaws a clear statement of its religious identity.
65. A clearly stated policy, outlining the relationship of the school to its sponsoring organization and the responsibilities of each, is included in the school's Bylaws and/or policy handbook.
66. There shall be a provision in the school's Bylaws for a Board of Trustees that shall be elected according to the guidelines established by the governing body of the affiliated religious organization/faith-based institution and in agreement with the school. Any nominee to the school's Board of Trustees from the affiliated religious organization/faith-based institution must meet the standards of membership for Trustees and go through the same vetting, nominating, election, and orientation process as all other Board members.
67. The school has a clearly articulated statement of its religious goals, and these are reflected in its policies, practices, and school culture and are communicated to all constituents.