

SACRED HEART

Commission on Goals

2026-27 MANUAL

Society of the Sacred Heart United States – Canada Province

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Sacred Heart Commission on Goals

Structure of the Sacred Heart Commission on Goals

The Provincial Team appoints the members of the Sacred Heart Commission on Goals (SHCOG).

The composition of the Sacred Heart Commission on Goals reflects the constituencies of the school communities:

- Head of School
- Trustee
- Leadership team member
- Faculty member
- Head of SHCOG
- Executive Director of the Network

General Qualifications for Members of Commission on Goals

- At least 3 years' experience in a Network school
- Demonstrated understanding of the *Goals and Criteria*
- Competency in his/her area in the school and an appreciation for all areas of the school
- Discretion
- Leadership ability
- Experience as a member of a Visiting Team and/or Steering Committee
- Ability to chair a Visiting Team
- Ability to work as a team
- Ability to commit annually to 3 meetings which are 2-3 days in length, and a 5-day Visit in most years

Assumptions Concerning Membership

- The term is ordinarily 3 years, renewable for 3 years.
- Ordinarily no 2 members of SHCOG will be from the same school.
- The members of SHCOG will be typically distributed geographically.
- If a member of SHCOG leaves the employ of his/her school, that person will leave SHCOG.
- If a trustee's term at an individual school ends while serving on SHCOG, the trustee remains on SHCOG for the duration of the SHCOG term.

Sacred Heart Commission on Goals

Role Description of the Commission on Goals Members

Overall Responsibilities:

- Understand and be committed to the *Goals and Criteria*.
- Understand the cyclical nature of the SHCOG process.
- Be able to explain thoroughly the elements of the process.
- Participate fully in SHCOG's discussions and work.
- Be available to give the time to the meetings, the Visits, and the preparation.
- Maintain objectivity while engaged in the work of SHCOG.
- Be familiar with the activities of the Network.
- Maintain discretion and honor confidentiality at all times.
- Operate as an effective team player.
- Be a good communicator.
- Be able to serve as Chair of a Visiting Team.

As Chair of a Visiting Team:

- Understand the school's Self-Study with depth
- Be in frequent communication with the Chair of the Self-Study Steering Committee.
- Finalize details of the Visit, including the schedule for the Visiting Team.
- Train and lead the Visiting Team ahead of the Visit and at the time of the Visit.
- Ensure that the Visit is conducted in the spirit of the *Goals and Criteria*.

Commission on Goals Members

SHEILA HAGGAS

Executive Director of the Network

BRITTNEY HERNANDEZ

Lower School Division Head

HILLARY FEERICK-HILLENBRAND

Head of School

BEN MIHOVK

Faculty

NICKI NOEL

Assistant Head of School

DIANE ROCHE, RSCJ

Trustee

ANGELA SCOTT

Head of School

PATRICIA SWENSON

Trustee

KELLY WEBER

Faculty

NAT WILBURN

Head of Conference

Assumptions for the SHCOG Process

Assumptions

- The Provincial Team of the Society of the Sacred Heart remains ultimately responsible for the implementation of the Society's mission in the schools of the Network.
- Network Schools exercise their accountability for mission to the Provincial Team through the required SHCOG Process.
- SHCOG is accountable to the Provincial Team.
- SHCOG's responsibility is to provide a process of accountability for the Society's mission in the Network of Sacred Heart Schools as expressed in the *Goals and Criteria*. SHCOG is not responsible for providing educational programs for various Network constituencies.
- The membership of SHCOG consists of the Head of SHCOG and up to ten members from the following areas of the school: Trustees, Heads, Leadership Teams, and Faculty.

Responsibilities for training

- SHCOG is responsible for the training of the Self-Study Steering Committees.
- The SHCOG member who chairs the Visiting Team is responsible to be in frequent contact with the Self-Study Steering Committee Chair.
- The SHCOG member who chairs the Visiting Team is responsible to train that team ahead of the Visit and during the Visit.
- Each step in the SHCOG process is structured around the *Goals and Criteria*.
- Every year in the school is important in terms of the school's focus on its Self-Study and Action Plans. The Visit is not the primary focus of the SHCOG Process.
- The SHCOG member who chairs the Visit oversees SHCOG's response to the school's Action Plan. If that member is no longer a member of SHCOG, another SHCOG member is appointed to oversee the Action Plan.

Elements of the Commission on Goals Process

YEAR I & II:

The Self-Study Steering Committee

The Self-Study is both a process and a document. The Self-Study Steering Committee is responsible for both.

The Self-Study Steering Committee leads the school community through its ongoing reflection on the *Goals and Criteria*. Its task is to:

- design the process of reflection that begins the development of the Self-Study.
- prepare, sign, and submit by email the Self-Study document to the Head of SHCOG by **October 1 of Year II**.
- If the school chooses to write one, facilitate the school community's response to the Visiting Team's Reflection.

The Self-Study Steering Committee must include members of the constituencies who are responsible for the implementation of the *Goals and Criteria* in the school. It is the dialogue throughout the process of reflection among these and all the different constituencies that ensures and deepens the commitment of the school to the life of the *Goals and Criteria*.

The Self-Study Steering Committee includes but need not be limited to the Head of School, a Trustee, a Leadership Team member, and a full-time Teacher. The Head is a member but not the Chair of the Committee. The Head appoints the Self-Study Steering Committee Chair by **April 1 of Year V** and notifies the Head of SHCOG of the appointment so that, when possible, the Steering Committee Chair can be appointed to a Visiting Committee for the following November. The Chair of the Self-Study Steering Committee is selected from full-time Sacred Heart educators (faculty, staff, or administration). The Head of SHCOG trains the Self-Study Steering Committee for its work of leading the school community through its Self-Study. The Head of SHCOG will also meet with the entire Board by their first Board meeting of the academic year of year I.

YEAR I & II:

The Self-Study as Process

The Self-Study as process

As a process, the Self-Study is the school community's reflection on how it lives the *Goals and Criteria*. It is based on the belief that a school community can renew itself by means of a reflective self-evaluation that yields fresh insights and recommitment. The reflection is an ongoing conversation among and between the diverse constituencies in the school (faculty not only speak with faculty, as well as with students, trustees, etc.). In this process, the school community assesses the quality of its active orientation to the *Goals and Criteria*. The Board is responsible for designing its own process as well as participating in the conversations with the school community. It discerns how it arrived at its present situation and how the *Goals and Criteria* challenge it. As a result of this reflection the school can not only determine where its strengths lie in relation to the *Goals and Criteria* but also express its concerns it has regarding how well it is living the vision expressed by them.

The Self-Study as process is the major work of **Year I**.

Elements of the Commission on Goals Process

YEAR I & II:

The Self-Study as a Document

The document that evolves from the school's conversation becomes the basis of the wider conversation among the school community, SHCOG, the Visiting Team, and the Provincial Team.

The 8 required elements of the document are:

I — School Profile Page including:

- Name of School and Foundation Year
- School Organization
 - Grades at the school
 - Grades in each division
- Enrollment
 - Total enrollment
 - Enrollment by division
- Faculty, Staff, and Administration
 - Total number of employees
 - Total number of classroom teachers and those academic positions involving direct student interaction
 - Number of academic administrators
 - Number of non-academic administrators
- Important acronyms referred to in your Self-Study

II — A narrative explanation of how new members of the community – faculty and staff, students, parents, and trustees – are oriented to the *Goals and Criteria*.

III — A narrative history of the last five years. The Self-Study Steering Committee designs the process for gathering the data for the history. It is responsible to synthesize the data to not more than two pages for the Self-Study document. This task may be delegated to another group.

IV — A narrative description of how the school community abides by each Goal and its Criteria. The narrative includes the strengths and challenges the community has identified for each Goal.

V — The trustees write a narrative description of how the Board abides by each Foundational Principle, including the strengths and challenges the Board has identified.

VI — Commendations: having analyzed and reflected on what the community conversations have revealed about how it lives the *Goals and Criteria*, the community determines not more than three commendations of itself. These commendations are the basis of the school's Action Plan and progress is reported at each trustee meeting.

VII — Recommendations: having analyzed and reflected on what the community conversations have revealed about how it lives the *Goals and Criteria*, the community makes no more than three recommendations to itself. These recommendations are the basis of the school's Action Plan and progress is reported at each trustee meeting.

Elements of the Commission on Goals Process

VIII — A brief narrative explanation of how trustees, students, faculty, administration, staff, parents, and alumnae/i and cross-constituency groups were involved in the Self-Study work and how these groups interrelated with each other.

It is unnecessary to include copies of all the instruments used to gather data.

All members of the Self-Study Steering Committee and the Chair of the Board of Trustees sign the Self-Study document. While the community may produce a document including meaningful photographs, hyperlinks, and other enhancements, The Steering Committee must submit a clean narrative copy of the Self-Study, excluding photographs, hotlinks, etc., to the Visiting Team.

Please number all pages and include the emails of all signers. The Chair of the Self-Study Steering Committee submits the document by email to the Head of the Conference by **October 1 of Year II**. In addition, one copy is placed in the school's SHCOG Binder.* The Head of the Conference is responsible to see a copy is placed in the Provincial SHCOG Binder.

*See page 13

Elements of the Commission on Goals Process

YEAR II: The Visit

The purpose of the Visit is:

- a) to reflect actively with the school community on the living out of the *Goals and Criteria*;
- b) to continue with the school community the reflection initiated by the Self-Study; and
- c) to offer, where possible, a fresh perspective on the commendations and the recommendations identified by the school community in the Self-Study.

The Visiting Team

The members of the Visiting Team are selected from among members of Network school communities. A member of SHCOG chairs the Visiting Team. Each Visiting Team includes a Head of School, a Trustee, a member of a leadership team, and a faculty member from one of the aforementioned relationships.

The Visiting Team and the Self-Study Steering Committee have mutual responsibility for the visit.

The visits take place in either of the two weeks prior to the week of Thanksgiving. For those schools being trained in the late summer of 2026, their Visits will be either the week of November 6-10, 2027, or the week of November 13-17, 2027. The

Chair of the Steering Committee should propose their first choice of dates to the Head of SHCOG by October 1, 2026. The visit date will be finalized with the Head of the SHCOG by November 1, 2026. The Visiting Team arrives by 4:00 PM on Saturday, and the Visit ends no later than noon on the following Wednesday.

A meeting of the entire Board must be scheduled for either Sunday or Monday during the visit. The Head of School does not attend the Board meeting during the visit.

During the Visit

All members of the school community must prioritize participation during the entire SHCOG visit. Care is taken not to schedule other off-campus activities.

A draft of the schedule is to be shared with the Visiting Team Chair by October 1, with the submission of the Self-Study. The Visiting Team Chair and the Self-Study Chair will work to confirm the final schedule by two weeks before the visit. The schedule should not be shared with the community until it has been agreed upon by the Chair of the Steering Committee and the Chair of the Visiting Committee. The Visiting Team may need to modify the schedule during the visit.

The Steering Committee chair should be available and check in face-to-face daily during the visit.

Everyone will attend only one constituency meeting, except for members of the Steering Committee, who will attend both the Steering Committee meeting and their respective constituency meeting.

Conversations with the Visiting Team are limited to the time allotted in the Constituency meeting. Members of the Visiting Team will not engage in individual discussions.

The Head of School is a constituency of their own. He/she does not attend other constituency meetings other than the Steering Committee. The Head of School reserves time for a meeting with the entire Visiting Team as well as daily “check-ins” with the Chair of the Visiting Team.

Elements of the Commission on Goals Process

YEAR II: Visiting Team Reflection

The Visiting Team writes its Reflection based on its experiences at the school. The members of the Visiting Team determine the format and length of this Reflection, and they are free to include any comments they wish to make. The written Reflection is shared first with the Head of School and the Chair of the Board by the Visiting Team Chair, and then usually with members of the school community in a manner designed by the Self-Study Steering Committee Chair and the Visiting Team Chair. A copy of the Reflection is placed in the school's SHCOG Binder. The Head of the Conference is responsible for ensuring that a copy is placed in the Provincial SHCOG Binder.

YEAR II: School Community's Response

If the school community so desires, it writes, under the leadership of the Self-Study Steering Committee, a Response to the Visiting Team's Reflection. The Response is addressed to the Provincial Team and is sent by email to the Head of the Conference who distributes it to all those who received the Self-Study within one month from the close of the visit.

YEAR II: Provincial Team's Letter

The Provincial Team, exercising its responsibility and authority for holding each school community accountable for the mission of the Society of the Sacred Heart as articulated in the *Goals and Criteria*, writes a Letter to the Head of the School, the Chair of the Board of Trustees, and the school community and sends a copy to the Head of SHCOG who shares it with the members of SHCOG. The Provincial Team's Letter is based on the Self-Study, the Annual Canonical Report for Sponsorship, the Visiting Team's Reflection, and the school community's written response, if there is one, and especially their own reflection(s) on Sacred Heart education. The Provincial Team's letter is sent by **February 1 of Year II**. The Chair of the Steering Committee is responsible to see a copy is placed in the school SHCOG Binder. The Head of SHCOG is responsible to see a copy is placed in the Provincial SHCOG Binder.

Elements of the Commission on Goals Process

YEAR II:

The Action Plan Steering Committee

The Action Plan Steering Committee leads the school community through its continuing reflection on the *Goals and Criteria*. The community is encouraged to continue in an ongoing conversation after submitting the Self-Study document. The work on the Action Plan can begin any time after the submission of the Self-Study document. The Action Plan Steering Committee comprises, but need not be limited to, the Head of School, a Trustee, a Leadership Team Member, and a Faculty Member, and, to ensure continuity, some members of the Self-Study Steering Committee. The Head is a member of the Action Plan Steering Committee but not the chair. The Head appoints the Action Plan Steering Committee Chair no later than **October 1 of Year II** so that the Chair participates in the visit cognizant of his/her particular responsibilities.

YEAR II:

The Action Plan

The Action Plan is both a process and a document. As a process, it continues the school community's reflection among its constituencies about how they will deepen its commitment to living out the *Goals and Criteria*. The Action Plan Steering Committee is free to choose the format of the Action Plan. The Head of the Action Plan Committee will schedule a call with the Chair of the Visiting Team after receiving the letter from the Provincial Team for any clarification or further instructions. As a document, the focus of the Action Plan is on (up to) three commendations and three recommendations it has made to itself as well as any made by the Visiting Team in its Reflection and the Provincial Team in its Letter. The Action Plan will include a thorough description of the process used in developing and writing the Action Plan Document. Prior to submission, the entire school community will have reviewed the Action Plan. Progress in implementing the Action Plan is reported on at each Board of Trustees meeting, ordinarily by the RSCJ member or the Provincial's designee. The Action Plan as a document indicates what the school hopes to accomplish and why, who is responsible for what, the anticipated outcome, and the dates by which the action will be accomplished.

All members of the Action Plan Steering Committee and the Chair of the Board sign the Action Plan document. The Chair of the Action Plan Committee submits the Action Plan to the Head of SHCOG by email by **April 1 of Year II. Please number all pages and include the email addresses of all signers.** A copy of the Action Plan is placed in the school's SHCOG Binder. The Head of SHCOG is responsible for ensuring that a copy of the Action Plan is placed in the Provincial SHCOG Binder.

Elements of the Commission on Goals Process

YEAR II:

SHCOG'S Response to the Action Plan

SHCOG reviews the Action Plan at its spring meeting. If SHCOG deems the Action Plan is complete, it indicates this in a letter from the SHCOG member who chaired the Visit (or an appointed delegate) and the Head of SHCOG. The letter is addressed to the Head of School, the Chair of the Board, and the school community. If the Action Plan is missing elements, SHCOG writes the Head of School no later than May 1 and the Action Plan Steering Committee Chair requesting that the Action Plan be completed accordingly and re-submitted by **October 1 of Year III**. SHCOG reviews the Action Plan at its fall meeting and either accepts it or makes a further request. If there is a further request, the deadline for re-submission is **April 1 of Year III**. SHCOG may require a periodic written update on the Action Plan and/or its implementation. Both the Action Plan and SHCOG's Response are placed in the Provincial SHCOG Binder and the School SHCOG Binder.

YEAR III, IV & V:

Implementation of and Accountability for the Action Plan

The school community shares the responsibility of implementing the Action Plan. The Chair of the Action Plan Committee will schedule a call with the Chair of the Visiting Team after having received the response letter from the Provincial Team (even if done prior). The community is responsible to the Board of Trustees for the Plan's implementation, and it is the responsibility of the Board to hold the school community accountable for the Plan's implementation. The Board is responsible for creating a process to track and review the community's progress on the Action Plan as a part of every Board meeting. The Head of SHCOG or a member of SHCOG will check in with the Head of the School or Board Chair concerning the implementation of the Action Plan.

Elements of the Commission on Goals Process

The Binder

The Binder is the official record of the conversation carried on throughout the SHCOG process by the three groups: the School, SHCOG, and the Provincial Team. Each group has a Binder which includes:

- the school's Self-Study
- the Visiting Team's Reflection
- the school community's written Response to the Visiting Team's Reflection if there is one
- the Provincial Team's Letter
- the school's Action Plan
- SHCOG's Response to the Action Plan accepting or requesting further information in the Action Plan
- if further information is requested, the ongoing correspondence between SHCOG and the school until the Action Plan is accepted

The contents of the Binder are accessible to those who bear responsibility for the life of the *Goals and Criteria* in the school (Provincial Team, SHCOG, Head of School, Trustees, Administration, and Faculty). The Head and Chair of the Board will decide to whom else it will be made available.

Sometime during the Visit, the Visiting Team Chair will review the contents of the Binder with the Head of School.

Some Responsibilities of...

The Self-Study Steering Committee (SC) Chair

- The SC Chair checks in with the Visiting Team (VT) Chair as needed, as soon as the VT Chair is named by SHCOG.
- The SC Chair reminds the Steering Committee trustee about the ongoing involvement of the Board of Trustees in the SHCOG process. Trustees are intended to engage in their own reflection as well as participate in reflection with other constituents. In addition, trustees review the draft of the Self-Study document and assign time on Board meeting agendas to track the progress of the Action Plan.
- The SC Chair arranges single room accommodations for VT members and communicates to the VT by email all the arrangements, including the name and number of the hotel, the school phone number, transportation from the airport to the hotel, etc. The Head of SHCOG sends the names and email addresses of the VT to the SC Chair.
- The SC Chair arranges for a private workspace (or two workspaces, one at the school and one at the hotel if the VT Chair requests two) that is large enough to be comfortable, well-lit, equipped with a worktable, a printer, and a shredder, if one is available.
- The SC Chair provides the VT Chair either with cash or a school credit card to pay for meals eaten out.
- The SC Chair has all travel reimbursements ready for VT members before their departures.
- The SC Chair and the VT Chair together draw up a draft schedule of the Visit, determining makeup and size of groups and length of sessions. The schedule is not communicated to the school until after it is finalized with the chair of the VT. The SC Chair reviews the schedule with the VT Chair to be clear about who does and who does not attend sessions and is responsible for communicating this information to the parties involved. For example, administrators do not attend sessions with faculty. If a school community member wears several hats, the Chairs determine which session that person attends. The SC Chair is responsible for making clear to the school community that the Visit does not include visiting classes.
- The initial draft schedule is submitted to the Head of SHCOG by email no later than **October 1 of Year II**. The schedule is finalized after the October meeting of SHCOG by the Steering Committee Chair and the Visiting Team Chair.
- The SC Chair arranges a time to acquaint the visitors with the environment in which the school is located. This is agreed upon by both Chairs. Ordinarily, this session does not exceed one hour.

Some Responsibilities of...

The Visiting Team (VT) Chair

Before the Visit the VT Chair

- Communicates frequently with the Steering Committee (SC) Chair.
- Reminds the SC Chair that the Self-Study due to the Head of SHCOG by October 1, and the draft schedule is due to the Visiting Team Chair by October 1.
- Checks with the SC Chair to determine if the Head of School has scheduled a full Board of Trustees meeting no later than the Monday of the visit and has communicated this date to the Board at the earliest possible moment.
- Establishes with the SC Chair the distinction between being a source of information and being a director of the process. The VT Chair does not become a consultant to the school about solutions to its issues.
- Makes clear with the SC Chair the need for the VT to have time for its own reflection.

At the Visit the VT Chair

- Uses time on Sunday to review expectations and elements of the SHCOG process with the Team and its members.
- Determines why or why not the VT will move as one body during the visit.
- Determines roles on the VT – who will write, who will track each goal, each constituency, etc.
- Presents a copy of the Reflection to the School Head and the Board Chair for their reading before any closing ceremony or other presentation to the public.
- Before sharing the Reflection with the community, reviews the next steps in the SHCOG process.
- Emails the Reflection to the Head of SHCOG, who then sends it to the Provincial Team and the members of SHCOG.
- Collects travel receipts of VT members for the SC Chair who arranges for reimbursements.
- The Chair of the VT meets with the Chair of the Action Plan Committee.

Deadlines

APPOINTMENT OF STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIR

April 1 — Year V

STEERING COMMITTEE TRAINING

August or September — Year I

SELF-STUDY

October 1 — Year II

DRAFT SCHEDULE OF VISIT

October 1 — Year II

APPOINTMENT OF ACTION PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIR

November 1 — Year II

VISIT

Sunday to Wednesday of either of the two
weeks before Thanksgiving — Year II

PROVINCIAL TEAM LETTER

February 1 — Year II

ACTION PLAN

April 1 — Year II

UPDATE TO ACTION PLAN *(IF REQUIRED)*

October 1 — Year III

UPDATE TO ACTION PLAN AND/OR ITS IMPLEMENTATION *(IF REQUIRED)*

Year III

5-Year Cycle of the Commission on Goals

	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	2030-2031
Sheridan Road/Chicago Convent/Stuart Hall San Francisco Duchesne/Omaha Halifax Woodlands	IV	V	I	II	III
Grand Coteau Newton Regis Stuart Villa Duchesne	III	IV	V	I	II
Bloomfield Hills Duchesne/Houston Montreal Princeton Academy St Philomena	II	III	IV	V	I
Bryn Mawr Carrollton Josephinum 91st St St. Charles	I	II	III	IV	V
Atherton Forest Ridge Greenwich Rosary Stone Ridge	V	I	II	III	IV



Conference of Sacred Heart Education