One system that certainly has enormous influence on schools is the WASC accreditation. Every 1-6 years, schools must allocate resources to provide evidence of meeting the standards established by WASC.

However, in his article, *Designing the Earthstation Academy*, David Thornburg states: “Current post-secondary accreditation, in my opinion, is one of the factors impeding educational progress. I will consider the Academy to have failed if I find that it qualifies for accreditation under the current standards.”

To affect true lasting school reform at the root level one must revise or throw out the very standards/foundation it’s built upon.

As I began this project I thought I could simply modify the WASC standards to bring about positive change. After I began working with the standards, I realized that they were so far removed from the educational goals and practices reviewed in this course that I would have to start over from scratch.

Thus, the following are accreditation standards that might bring about the lofty goals and ideas we’ve been studying for the last six weeks.
The Handbook of Accreditation  
(WASC, January, 2025)

Purpose of Accreditation

*To develop and foster institutional improvement.*

What does accreditation mean?

*Accreditation certifies:*

*An institution strives to meet established criteria and/or standards.*

*An institution strives to meet its stated objectives.*

WASC’s nine accreditation standards provide the foundation of the accreditation process. These pages provide a very brief summary of each standard. Readers are encouraged to read the Handbook and should *not* rely on this summary as their sole source of information about the standards.

The Handbook can be ordered from WASC by calling 555-632-5000 or faxing 555-632-8361.
Standard 1 - Institutional Integrity

Objective: The individual maintains the right and responsibility of decision
Indicator Learners, facilitators, and staff collaborate on choosing problem-based learning projects that are relevant to the individual.
Indicator There is clear equity of access to the gamut of tools accessing, storing, evaluating, analyzing, synthesizing, communicating and presenting information in a variety of relevant formats.
Indicator Programs foster creative solutions to problems encountered throughout an ever-changing world.

Objective Excellence
Indicator Facilitators and staff are loyal to increased learning, both individually and globally.
Indicator Facilitators and staff strive to act ethically in all situations.
Indicator Facilitators and staff have pride in their work and are motivated to strive for continued improvement in all areas.

Objective Lifelong learning
Indicator Programs develop and foster conducting research, integrating knowledge and, and forming opinions.
Indicator Programs develop and foster information literacy.
Indicator Learning styles recognized and instruction provided that caters to the various styles with rich content appropriate in scope and depth.

Objective Cultural and Academic Diversity
Indicator Programs develop and foster an understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures, both academic and/or cultural/social.
Indicator Programs cross cultural boundaries and provide collaboration with others from diverse cultures.
Indicator Programs foster the ability to distinguish among ideas and reconcile diverse perspectives.

Objective Relevant and meaningful collaboration
Indicator Learners have the opportunity and ability (skills, access, and technical capability) to collaborate with other learners, facilitators, and professionals addressing similar kinds of problems locally and globally.
Standard 2 - Institutional Purpose

Objective: Lifelong learning
Indicator: Programs designed to develop and foster skills to access, collect, store, evaluate, analyze, synthesize, communicate and present information and knowledge in a variety of available formats.
Indicator: Access to the gamut of tools and equipment required.
Indicator: Programs designed to incorporate self-evaluation and determination of current knowledge and ideas.
Indicator: Programs designed to help learners recognize when/what growth occurs as a result of participating in activities.

Objective: Equity of Access
Indicator: All learners are provided access to the skills and tools/equipment required achieving lifelong learning.
Indicator: All learners are treated in a holistic systemic manner, with special emphasis on their individual needs whether they are physical, social, or cognitive.

Standard 3 - Governance & Administration

Objective: The hierarchical structure of the institution is designed to best promote the institutional purposes
Indicator: Individual learning facilitators have the freedom to choose what methods and practices to employ to best achieve the institutional purposes.

Objective: The administration provides required support
Indicator: Employee evaluation is based on a value added model whereby assessment and review is used to identify areas needing improvement and help is then provided in an effective and timely manner.
Indicator: To provide freedom from mundane tasks, secretarial support is provided for:
- The filling and filing of any forms and reports
- Routine correspondence and communication
- Typing, printing, copying, and other production, either physical or virtual

Objective: Proper acquisition and allocation of resources
Indicator: Funds are acquired appropriately, allowing the educational institution to decide how best to allocate funds.
Indicator: The administrative financial priority is the allocation of funds to provide for institutional purposes.
Indicator: Allocation of resources is fair and objective, based on best practices for achieving the institutional purposes.
Standard 4 - Educational Programs

Objective: An overarching structure provides learners the skills/tools required being lifelong learners
Indicator: Programs develop and foster abstract skills in a highly contextualized setting.
Indicator: Programs are relevant to the individual’s life.
Indicator: Regardless of solution, the goal of any problem-based project is information literacy.

Objective: Information Literacy
Indicator: Programs develop and foster skills to access, store, evaluate, analyze, synthesize, communicate and present knowledge and information in a variety of available formats.
Indicator: Programs develop and foster creative problem solving strategies that allow the flexibility of adjusting to changing conditions.

Objective: Equity
Indicator: Programs are designed to reach the entire gamut of individual learning styles and dominant intelligences.
Indicator: Individuals are provided compensatory skills/tools in the advent of physical, social, or cognitive deficiencies.

Objective: Programs are rigorous and relevant
Indicator: Activities are broad in scope to provide flexibility emphasizing aspects meaningful and relevant to the individual.
Indicator: Activities are designed to reflect current and future problems.
Indicator: Activities have the depth of design to implement tools and equipment currently considered ‘state-of-art’.
Indicator: Activities require extensive use of information literacy skills.

Objective: Communication and Collaboration
Indicator: Programs designed to foster collaboration with other learners, facilitators, and corporate individuals involved in similar problem-based projects, locally and globally.
Indicator: Programs designed to provide a high degree of peer-to-peer collaboration; learner-to-learner, facilitator-to-facilitator, corporate-to-corporate, etc., locally and globally.
Indicator: Programs designed to develop and foster communication and presentation of knowledge and information using a variety of appropriate format and styles, locally and globally.
Standard 5 - Faculty and Staff

Objective: The size and adequacy of the workforce facilitates the institutional purpose
Indicator: Adequate staff provided on-site specifically to facilitate any communication, reporting, filing of forms, or other clerical or extraneous activities required.
Indicator: Adequate staff provided on-site to install, configure, upgrade, and repair equipment and facilities.
Indicator: The pool of learning facilitators provides enough variety in specialty, expertise and experience to accomplish the institutional purpose.
Indicator: Adequate staff provided on-site specifically to provide for a safe environment.

Objective: Staff development is meaningful and relevant
Indicator: Learning facilitators, support staff, and administration are given the opportunity and ability to attend a variety of workshops, conferences, meetings and classes to best enhance their abilities to achieve the institutional purpose.
Indicator: Learning facilitators have the opportunity and ability to work in the corporate field one in every four years to stay abreast of current practices, procedures, discoveries, and equipment.
Indicator: Staff development is a part of the normal workday, not an added burden.

Standard 6: Libraries and Computing

Objective: Resources adequately support teaching and learning
Indicator: Access is provided to the vast gamut of tools required accessing, storing, evaluating, analyzing, synthesizing, communicating and presenting knowledge and information in a variety of relevant formats.
Indicator: Adequate staff provided to give assistance using equipment and integrating information literacy.
Indicator: Ready access to appropriate facilities/equipment for large and small group instruction, as well as individual instruction.
Indicator: Wide range of equipment and tools used achieving the institutional goals readily available for checkout.

Objective: Resources adequately support career preparation
Indicator: Equipment and tools available representative of current ‘state-of-art’.
Indicator: Corporate partners provide training and knowledge to access and use ‘state-of-art’ practices and equipment.
Standard 7: Social Services

Objective: Individuals are cared for in a holistic manner
Indicator: Medical, vision, and dental care provided.
Indicator: Services provided to ensure mental health and well being.
Indicator: Any physical and/or cognitive disabilities identified and compensating action taken to help ensure equity.
Indicator: Administration and other staff provide adequate and effective procedural support.

Objective: Learners are provided the opportunity of a balanced life
Indicator: Access provided to a wide range of sporting and recreational activities.
Indicator: Access provided to resources and facilities for pursuing a wide range of interests and hobbies.
Indicator: A large variety of social situations and activities provide the opportunity to develop people skills, etiquette, and social competence.
Indicator: Corporate partners provide a variety of internships, temporary employment, job shadowing and other venues that provide relevant and meaningful experiences.

Standard 8: Physical Resources

Objective: The Physical Environment and Campus Facilities Support Teaching and Learning
Indicator: Adequate space and equipment provided to allow large and small group instruction as well as individual instruction.
Indicator: Space and equipment provided to allow quiet planning and introspection, as well as production work.
Indicator: Facilities provided to allow for personal needs such as food, rest/sleep, hygiene (showers, etc.), and store/change clothes.
Indicator: Space and equipment provided to learners, facilitators, and other staff to collaborate and communicate both physically and virtually, locally and globally.
Indicator: Adequate staff and equipment provided to ensure a safe environment.
Indicator: Adequate storage and repair facilities provided to allow timely and effective repair/upgrade of equipment and facilities.
Standard 9: Financial Resources

Objective: Adequacy of resources
Indicator: Adequate funding provided to accomplish the institutional goals.
Indicator: Sufficient funding of facilitators and staff to attract more competent experts in various fields of endeavor.

Objective: Financial planning and budget practices
Indicator: Sufficient resources allocated to provide timely hiring of personnel to meet the institutional purpose.
Indicator: Sufficient resources allocated to provide timely purchase/acquisition of tools and equipment to meet the institutional purpose.
Indicator: Sufficient funds for unexpected requirements such as purchase, repair, and/or upgrades due to changing conditions and/or needs.

(Note: Funding of public education systems has changed dramatically since the passage of the following laws:

SB-2295, the Bartok-Copeland act that provides 35 cents of every dollar spent on law enforcement is used for public education programs.

and

SB-4375, the Verdi-Puccini act that provides 50% of the amount spent on military programs and equipment is spent on public education, above and beyond any other expenditure allocated for public education.)