****

**SERVING ON A VISITING TEAM**

# Conference of Educational Administrators of

# Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD)

C

ongratulations on being invited to serve on a CEASD Visiting Team! As a Team member you will be one of a handpicked group of educators representing the CEASD with the responsibility to conduct a thorough validation of the school’s self-study and to make an accreditation recommendation to the CEASD Board. The school’s stakeholders have spent countless hours conducting a self-study and developing a planning process focused on improving student performance and the school’s capacity to effect that improvement. The Visiting Team will serve both as external reviewers and as “critical friends,” with the goal of leaving the school in a better position to achieve its mission and objectives than it was before the Team’s visit.

**Qualifications for the Visiting Team Member**

Following are the qualifications for serving on a Visiting Team:

* A practicing or retired educator, either a teacher or administrator, with well developed professional knowledge and skills/experience with CEASD Accreditation (when appropriate exceptions are granted)
* Available for service for four days including evening work sessions
* Able to stay overnight in the Team’s hotel/motel for three nights
* Ability to make objective observations and conclusions based on evidence presented
* Ability to work intensively and to cooperate with other Team members in meeting the expectations for the Team
* Excellent writing skills
* Ability to use a computer and to use Microsoft Word for writing reports
* A team member who has no conflict of interest with the school, ie., previous consultant to the school within the past three years, family member who works at the school, etc.

**CEASD School Improvement Protocol for Accreditation**

The CEASD protocol for accreditation focuses on improvement in student performance and in the school’s capacity to affect that growth. Our protocol establishes or builds upon various planning and school growth and improvement efforts, with an emphasis on the actual results in improved student performance. All schools are required to establish objectives for improving student performance based on its vision of a preferred future for the students and goals and objectives and will also include objectives for organizational improvement. (Some of the regional accrediting associations have specific requirements for student performance objectives if it is a dual visit.) Thus, the accreditation process is aimed at continuous improvement; it is a future-oriented and visionary process. In addition, the CEASD protocols provide for a *continuous* review of programs and services and of the results of student performance.

**The Role of the Visiting Team**

The Visiting Team is charged with the responsibility of making a recommendation to the CEASD Board regarding the school’s accreditation based on the following:

* Does the school meet all twelve CEASD Standards for Accreditation?

The twelve Standards for Accreditation set expectations for quality in all aspects of the school’s programs and services. All twelve Standards must be met for a school to be recommended for Full Accreditation.

* + - Does the school meet the expectations of the CEASD Guidelines? The CEASD Guidelinesrequires that the school
  + Has developed organizational elements and processes that lead to an ethic of continuous planning to grow and improve student performance.
  + Has a mission to establish a vision of a preferred future and a set of beliefs to guide the school’s work and its improvement efforts.
  + Has identified student performance objectives and may include organizational capacity objectives.
  + Has developed action plans/school improvement plans to achieve the objectives.

While serving on the Visiting Team, you will be representing the CEASD, your own school and yourself. Therefore, it is important that you understand the expectations for the professional conduct of Team members:

* Remember at all times that you are a guest of the school.
* You have an obligation to review, observe, study, and inquire, but it is not your responsibility to tell your hosts how to do things. You are not a consultant.
* You are not there to “inspect” the school or only to find things wrong. And, you are not to compare the school to your own or to evaluate individual staff members.
* Instead, you are there to determine if the school meets the Standards for Accreditation and to validate its plan for growth and improvement in student performance. Be gracious, considerate, respectful, and open-minded.
* Questions should be open-ended and give the stakeholders the opportunity to tell how they meet the Standards and about their improvement plan.
* Avoid making “snap” judgments and voicing criticisms.
* Particularly, refrain from telling how things are done in your school.
* Remember, you are evaluating this school and its plan *in terms of its own mission, beliefs, and objectives and not your own values.*
* Please remain objective and impartial.
* You have an obligation to not use the visit as a way for you to find employment at the school or recruit staff from that school to come to your school.

The deliberations you and your colleagues on the Visiting Team have are to be held in confidence during and following the visit. When you depart from the host school, your role and your responsibilities as a reviewer come to an end, but your obligation to maintain professional confidentiality remains with you as you resume your customary duties at home. The Team’s report itself is a confidential matter between the Chair, the school, and the CEASD Board.

**The Work of the Visiting Team**

Your Visiting Team Chair will introduce you to the team’s schedule, the purposes and expected outcomes of the visit, and his or her expectations at an organizational and training meeting when you first arrive. You will spend most of your time during the visit interviewing representative stakeholders of the school–teachers, administrators, residential personnel, related service personnel, students, parents, community etc. The Team Chair will provide suggested questions and interview techniques. You will be asked to write a narrative of the Team’s conclusions on one or more areas (e.g., planning process, content of the plan, or specific standards such as Student Services or Educational Programs). The Chair will have a template for the Visiting Team’s written report. The Chair, however, is responsible for preparing and submitting the final report. The Team will do its work both during the day and in the evenings.

**Logistics**

Your lodging as well as your meals during the visit will be arranged and paid for by the school or provided. The host school will also reimburse you for your travel costs unless the school has a contract with the National Office. Travel expenses can include mileage, tolls, train fare, etc. Please retain all receipts. Professional dress is expected for the daytime, and comfortable casual clothes may be worn for evening meetings at the hotel. Since the report will be drafted during the visit, it is very helpful if you are able to bring a laptop computer with Microsoft Word to the visit.

**Arrangements with Your Own School**

In most cases, you have received this invitation because someone has recommended you to serve on a Visiting Team. Remember, serving on a Visiting Team is a voluntary service that CEASD member schools provide for each other. Therefore, you will not receive any monetary compensation from either CEASD or the host school.

**In Conclusion**

The CEASD greatly appreciates your willingness to further the quality of education and the process of school improvement through accreditation by serving on this Visiting Team. We wish you a very enjoyable and beneficial experience! Please sign the statement below indicating that you understand the expectations of serving on a visiting team and return it by e-mail to the CEASD National Office.

Or, fill out the [online form](https://forms.gle/Hf8KxgoWB2VA5Rrn7).

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

(Print Name)

I have read the above document, Serving On a Visiting Team, and agree to abide by the stipulations in this document during and after serving on a CEASD Visiting Team.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature) (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_